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IDEAL HUNTING — AND — FISHING GROUNDS

Johnson H. C.



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Ideal Hunting and Fishing Grounds.

SINCE the early explorations of the Mississippi by the adventurous La Salle, who traveled the Father of Waters from source to mouth, the heavily timbered low grounds along its lower course have been deservedly famous for a variety and profusion of game, unrivalled throughout the length and breadth of our country. Centuries have passed since powder and lead first superseded the Indian's arrow in its destructive work among the deer and bears of the great Southwest, and in this interval the bison herds of the plains have been literally annihilated, and the wildest recesses of the Rocky Mountains penetrated in search of game; but still the brakes of the Southern swamps guard their denizens as jealously as in the past — a vast and inexhaustible reservoir replenishing from its abundance the game supply of a thinly inhabited region two hundred miles in width and reaching from Southern Missouri to the waters of the Mexican Gulf. Here, sheltered by the impenetrable tangles of brush and briar, and secure in the solitude they love from the intrusive gaze of their human enemies, the graceful fawns gambol about their dam in fearless glee, and the mother bear teaches her ungainly offspring the first lessons in the school of life. Theirs is the unbroken solitude of a great forest — that one thing essential to the preservation of our noblest species of big game; and, in the present as in the past, they enjoy an immunity from danger of whistling lead shared by the game of no other region, however remote.

A north and south line drawn through the center of the United States to-day will divide the remnant of American game in almost equal portions. This will probably sound like an apocryphal statement to a majority of sportsmen, who have grown to consider the

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great West as synonymous with all that is attractive to lovers of the rifle and choke-bore, but it is nevertheless a fact. The short-sighted policy of a generation of pot-hunters has swept from existence the large game of our prairies, and the stringent protection laws lately enacted by the Legislatures of States on the Pacific slope may be accepted as proof that California, Oregon and Washington have but little of fur or feather to be benefited by protection—for nature's gifts are never valued until they are slipping from our grasp. Even among the mountains of Wyoming, Montana and Idaho, the rifle of the market gunner has been busy, and the sportsmen tourists to the Cour D'Alene, Big Horn and Wind river ranges are frequently forced to return with nothing in the way of trophies to repay them for the time and expense of their trip. But, brushed aside, as it were, by the westward progress of industrial immigration, the game of the Central States has sought refuge aside from the beaten track of this human tide, finding congenial surroundings in a region from which it will never be driven. In many of the Eastern States the good effects of rigid game protection is being felt. In localities in Maine and New Hampshire—and even Massachusetts—deer can be found in numbers where forty years ago they were totally extinct; but in Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana, protection, until of late, has been scanty and grudgingly bestowed, natural causes alone deserving credit for the profusion of game still existing within the limits of those three States. The inhabitants of a backwoods region rarely take kindly to game protective measures, and in every legislative convention this conservative element is well represented, and by men who are prompt and vigorous in combating any bill that may threaten what they are pleased to call encroachment upon their "rights." They have grown accustomed to look upon wild game as the rightful property of whosoever possesses ability to secure it—regardless of time and season—and, rather than submit to an abatement of their self-claimed prerogatives, would connive at the utter annihilation of the game they claim to prize so highly.

Perhaps, however, it would be well in this connection to trace another cause that has materially aided in decimating, or rather destroying, the big game of the West. At this period of the world's history very little, in any direction, can be accomplished without the

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intervention and aid of the pen and printing press, and the killing of an elk or grizzly, when chronicled in the sporting journals of America and Europe, has naturally led tourists, emulous of like renown, to visit the scenes where those lucky chroniclers found their game. Much has been written in praise of the hunting grounds of the West, but practically nothing in regard to those adjacent to deep, cypress-shadowed streams of the South. The watchword of the hunter has ever been "Westward, Ho!" but the time is near at hand when, from the turbulent waters of the Big Muddy to the Pacific's gold-strewn sands, little will be left to tempt the pressing of trigger or the ignition of gunpowder. Prompted by the glowing pen-pictures of a Pickett or a Hallock, sportsmen, singly and in couples and trios, endure the tedium of journeys to Alaska and our westernmost mountains, wade icy torrents and clamber along the snow-burdened walls of gloomy cañons, only to find at last that they are groping in mines long ago since robbed of their golden treasures and tracing vanished sunbeams through the darkness of an endless night.

However, it is unnecessary to resort to comparisons in order to describe in terms of sufficient warmth the attractions offered to sportsmen by the hunting grounds of Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana, contiguous to the Iron Mountain Railway and its various branches. All-sufficient would be the most commonplace recital by any one of the numerous sportsmen who have visited this region within the last few years. A land where the extremes of heat and cold are never known, snowshoes and alpenstocks alike unnecessary, and the comforts of camp life unalloyed by a dread of being "snowed in," demolished by avalanches, or smothered by sandstorms, its forests are always easy of access from the outer world, and its wildest regions are, at most, but a few hours removed from railway stations and telegraph lines. Yet, even among the more thickly settled portions of the uplands bordering the swamps, a trained deerhound will strike the scent of game in a few moments' search; while farther back from the noise and bustle of the settlements, hidden by seemingly endless forests, in which the mark of the woodman's axe is seldom found, all the varieties of beasts and birds originally inhabiting the locality can still be discovered in pretty much the oldtime profusion. This is the ideal hunting ground — the true Sportsman's

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ON A RUNWAY IN ARKANSAS.

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Paradise; for no son of Nimrod had ever need to leave it empty-handed, and a slightest knowledge of its manifold attractions will effectually wean the lover of good sports from any desire to visit other ranges, whatever they may offer in the way of four-footed or feathered game.

Other things being equal, the gunner, when mapping out a future trip, will invariably give preference to the locality wherein the greatest variety of game can be found with the least fatigue and trouble; therefore the region penetrated by the Iron Mountain system has won a well-deserved popularity, that must become more general with the lapse of time. In the more broken, hilly country to the west of the main line of railroad, as well as throughout the lowland stretching eastward to the Mississippi, deer are still quite plentiful. By this it is not intended to imply merely that it is possible, by careful and persistent search, to discover isolated specimens of the agile and wary *Cervus Virginianus*, as is the case in some of the so-called game regions of the North and West. It is simply a plain and unvarnished statement of facts and may be accepted as such without reservation. The hunting region referred to here has never been depleted of its game and restocked like those of the Northeastern States; it has never been overrun, like the forest ranges of other sections, by peltry-hunting Creeks and Winnebagoes, and the cowboys and miners of the Western Territories have never frightened the echoes of these grand old woods with the ceaseless clamor of their Winchesters and revolvers. To a great extent, the country still remains in its original state of nature, and if it were possible instantly to divest Arkansas and Louisiana of their forest growth, the number of deer discovered would be a revelation, even to those accustomed to hunting in the best ranges of the extreme West. Taken collectively, the States mentioned undoubtedly contain more white-tail, or Virginia deer than can be found elsewhere in a similar extent of territory.

The bear of the swamps is of the ordinary black variety, never dangerous to mankind unless pressed so closely that there is no possibility of its escape through flight. Consequently the element of danger is lacking in their pursuit, but there are but few hunters so hardy that they would consider this as detracting to any extent

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from the interest of the chase. Bears are still occasionally encountered in the more sparsely settled mountain districts of Missouri and Arkansas, but their favorite haunt is in the tangles of cane, briars and vines, locally known as brakes, found everywhere throughout the swampy districts. Here they reign as supreme rulers over the savage solitudes, rarely disturbed by the planters and timbermen dwelling in the vicinity, except when they decimate the swine herds of the one or forage in the meager larder of the other. Their flesh and skins would, doubtless, lead to a destructive campaign against them—for bear meat is readily salable in any market; but still hunting Bruin is tedious work, and a bear chase with dogs generally terminates with a rousing fight, from which, the pack, however experienced, emerges with broken limbs and bleeding sides. In the early days bears were very abundant in the mountainous regions of Central and Western Arkansas, and were commonly hunted in the coldest months of winter when they were hibernating in caves. Provided with a torch and armed with an old flint-rock rifle, the hardy bear hunter would venture to Bruin's sleeping apartment, far in the recesses of the hills, and deliver the fatal shot at the shortest possible range. At present, however, bear hunting in the hills would be a profitless undertaking. Grown weary of unceasing persecution, Bruin has emigrated to a lower and far safer region, and now takes his long winter's sleep in the hollow of some lordly cypress or gum, far above the reach of the floods that inundate the surrounding territory. There are but few professional bear hunters, and of those, the majority trap more bear than they kill by legitimate hunting.

Panthers, while not abundant, are still occasionally met, and the muddy margins of forest pools are often dotted with the imprints of their giant paws. Wild cats, the only other representative of the feline race found in the region herein described, are so plentiful as to cause endless trouble to deer hunters, whose hounds will often leave the trail of their legitimate game to pursue "puss" as she bounds from her lair. Long experience and frequent chastising will render the older dogs proof against temptation, but an antipathy for cats is one of the most prominent traits of puppyhood. A wildcat is no mean antagonist when "cornered," but unless surprised, will

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invariably seek refuge in a tree, climbing with the agility of a squirrel. Their tracks are common everywhere, and hunters in the Arkansas lowgrounds can indulge in a successful wildcat hunt almost any night in the year, and are liable to stumble upon a "bob-tail" at almost any time while still hunting.

Many valuable hounds have fallen victims to the gray wolves, whose sharp teeth and enormous size render them dangerous opponents in a "rough and tumble" fight. But every year the wolves are decreasing in number, though their mournful howling will still frequently mar the slumber of the sportsman who is unaccustomed to this peculiar "music of the forest." They lie by day in the very thickest of the undergrowth on the upland ridges, venturing forth at night to devour anything of flesh and blood that comes in their way, and will frequently catch the calves and young pigs of the backwoods farmer within pistol shot of his cabin. Wolves are rarely encountered by the still-hunter, except in the early dawn, and their stealth and watchfulness render them very difficult to kill.

The wild turkey, though the wariest and hardest of approach of all varieties of American game, always shows a reluctance to leave its accustomed feeding grounds, and persistently lingers amid the clearings of the older-settled districts, only growing, if possible, more cautious and watchful as the farms grow in number and the wooden strips between them gradually lessen in extent. Universally distributed over hill and bottom land alike, and, unlike the deer, afoot and foraging from dawn till dusk, the turkey's keenness of sight and hearing is a potent safeguard, and the hunter who matches his skill against the cunning of an old gobbler must make no false move in the management of his campaign. The amateur, on his first outing, is apt to note that, while "turkey sign" is abundant, the turkeys themselves are notable mainly by reason of their scarcity, but, even in this branch of hunting, experience and patience will earn their reward in the end, and in due course of time the mottled bronze plumage of the wild gobbler will begin to litter the ground in the vicinity of the camp fire.

Quail, or partridges, are rarely included by the local gunners when enumerating the varieties of game to be found within the limits of their hunting grounds. Each field has its covey or coveys, and the

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A CAMP IN THE PINERIES, ARK.

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untilled, brush-grown ridges outside the territory subject to annual overflows, will amply repay inspection by wing shots who are not easily discouraged by rough walking and possess a fair degree of skill at snap-shooting in close cover. Quail inhabiting the broad fields of the larger plantations are generally so easy to approach that the charm of the sport is in a great degree lessened. The birds are unaccustomed to look upon mankind with suspicion, huddle closely together at the approach of a dog, and rarely flush unless compelled to do so. So far, very few Northern gunners have condescended to spend their days in the South shooting quail, preferring to follow larger and wilder game, but a week among the coveys on the Arkansas, Red or Washita river plantations would be an experience unequalled by anything to be enjoyed in the older States, and never to be forgotten so long as the shooter retains an interest in matters pertaining to the dog and gun.

In years gone by, many prairie chickens were to be found on Grand Prairie in Arkansas, and other prairies of smaller extent in the same, but the fate that has pursued the pinnated grouse in other regions has overtaken it here. South of Alexandria, La., some chicken shooting may be had, but at many points where they were once abundant the grouse has now disappeared. Writers in the various sportsmen's journals have credited Arkansas with the possession of many ruffed grouse, but the statement has no foundation in fact, and is on a par with others of like nature that are continually finding their way into print. The southern limit of the habitat of ruffed grouse west of the Mississippi river, hardly reaches the dividing line between Missouri and Arkansas. Nine out of every ten hunters, in the last mentioned State, know of the royal game bird only by reputation, but it can well be spared where other varieties of feathered game are so abundant.

In the late fall months, and frequently until the beginning of January, the sloughs and slashes of Southern Missouri and Arkansas are filled with wild fowl—mallard, teal, and wood duck, with a sprinkling of other varieties—feeding upon the acorns of the willow, oak and overcup. With the first cool breath from the north they are assembled here by the thousands, remaining until the more severe weather prompts them to drift on in the wake of a vanished sum-

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mer, the greater portion of their number spending the winter in the sunny lakes of Louisiana, or in the sheltered bays that indent the gulf coast. Occasionally, but not every winter, there is a flight of canvasbacks and redheads, and along the larger rivers wild geese and brants abound. Snipe shooting can be had in its season on the various small prairies, but very little attention is paid to this class of sport.

The days of the trapping brigades came to an end a half century ago, but there are still hundreds of men who derive a revenue from the capture and sale of furs, and Southeastern Missouri and Arkansas has long been considered the choicest of trapping grounds. The climate is a trifle too warm to admit of furs reaching the highest perfection, but the quality is fair, while as regards *quantity* nothing is left to be desired. The coon and mink furnish the greater part of the peltries taken; but there is a fair sprinkling of beaver and otter, while possum and skunk are so common that they are continually stepping an unwary foot in the traps designed to effect more valuable captures. A great many bears are caught by trappers, who set huge steel traps and log pens near their usual haunts, but wolves and wildcats are generally too cautious to allow their hunger or curiosity to lead them into dangers from which there is no retreat. Trapping, as a pursuit, is not likely to appeal very forcibly to the fancy of the average sportsman, and it is perhaps as well that such is the case, for in Arkansas there is a law, still in force, which requires the purchase of a license or permit by non-resident hunters or trappers who ply their craft for profit within the limits of the State, or, failing in this, enforces the payment of a heavy fine.

Such, briefly stated, are the attractions that await the hunter in the region of which we write. The list of game as given, will hold good in almost every locality, though, naturally, in every range some one or more variety leads in abundance. Squirrels, foxes and grays, and cotton-tail and swamp rabbits are everywhere too common to deserve special mention as game, but their presence adds zest and variety to the scenes of sylvan beauty, further enlivened by the thousands of feathered migrants, halting on the passage southward, as though reluctant to continue their journey to a less at-

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tractive region whose climate grants them immunity from the paralyzing chill of winter.

To that second great class of sportsmen, the brethren of the "gentle angle," this vast expanse of wooded hills and lowlands, with its numerous navigable rivers and thousands of streams of less consequence, offers attractions second to none within the boundaries of our Union. The claim has been made that in the more sluggish bayous and streams immediately tributary to the Mississippi, the fish found are not of the kind known to the sportsman as game fish, but this is another error so transparent that it is hardly worth refutation. If large-mouth black bass, averaging from two to five pounds in weight, are not sufficiently "gamey"—if pike-perch, crappie and gaspergou are unfit occupants for an angler's creel or beneath the notice of a modern disciple of Izaak Walton; then the foregoing statement is based upon facts and the fisherman had best confine himself to the to be fingerlings taken from the famous streams of the Adirondacks and the Maine woods. However, it is true that *here* all are not game fish that take the bait, for a minnow caster may at any moment find himself vainly striving to restrain the erratic movements of a hook-stung dog fish, channel cat, or alligator gar; and, then, though the sport is lively, the "wind up" is often to be regretted, for a gar weighing from fifty to two hundred pounds has a way of demolishing light tackle that is discouraging, to say the least, and it is not every channel cat or grindle that will permit itself to be towed ashore by a line incapable of sustaining one-fourth of its actual weight. Aside from the ravenous bait-takers mentioned, the streams are stocked with an abundance of salmon trout, perch, buffalo, shad, drum and the different varieties of the "cat" family—some of them attaining enormous dimensions. As one writer has truthfully said: "The fisherman who visits Arkansas may grow satiated with sport, but he will never tire of it for want of success," and this verdict, delivered by one who has had opportunities to judge from experience, will apply with equal force to the States adjoining Arkansas on the north and south.

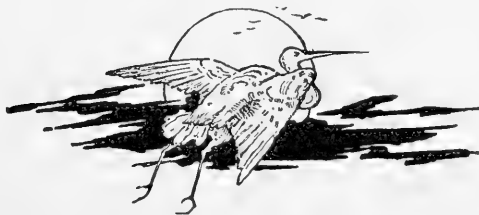
How to Reach the Woods.

THE sportsman, by perfecting his arrangements in advance, can leave his office at the close of business hours, and after a leisurely discussed supper, seek refreshing slumber in the luxurious berth of a Pullman coach, to awaken next morning in the hunting grounds of Arkansas, and, participating in a bear chase or deer-drive, or, perchance, catching a soul-satisfying creel of lordly bass, find himself again in the city on the morning of the second day before the sun has gilded the smoke-stained dome of the court house. However, trips of such short duration, though possible, are not to be recommended, for most sportsmen are so constituted that a single day in the woods will only excite an uncontrollable longing to linger on, in spite of the calls of business, rather than to return to the old atmosphere of care and worry, now rendered a thousand times more tiresome by comparison with the wild life of the woods. The hunter or angler with but a single day to spare, had best confine his wanderings within narrower limits, contenting himself with breathing the free air of the fields and dreaming of the time when, the annual vacation in order, he will be at liberty to pack his "duffle" in the trunk or canvas bag reserved for such occasions, roll his blankets within the folds of his tent and turn his back upon civilization for a term of weeks rather than hours. Within the last few years, hundreds of sportsmen from all portions of the North and East have visited the streams and forests to be reached by way of the Iron Mountain system from St. Louis, Memphis or Cairo, with the almost invariable result, that those who go once repeat the trip upon the recurrence of the hunting season, and relate their successes to their friends and associates who are thus led to follow in their footsteps and strive to equal their achievements. Naturally, a universal inquiry has arisen in regard to the best hunting and fishing grounds of Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana and adjoining States, and the letters upon this subject received by the General Passenger Département of the Iron Mountain Route have become so

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numerous that it has been found advisable to compile all available information in pamphlet form for general distribution—a task of no little difficulty, chiefly because the mass of data at hand, relating to such a large scope of territory, must be carefully edited and “boiled down” in order to force it all within the prescribed limits. The facts that follow have been furnished by residents of the localities mentioned and compiled by a person thoroughly acquainted with the subject in all its bearings, and though, in a good many instances, thoroughness of detail has been sacrificed to the demand for brevity, the accuracy of the information given may be fully relied upon.

Facts have been given, and facts only, and, with these supplied, the average sportsman can safely be left to plan out his trip as he may think best. The object of this pamphlet is not to furnish a guide book directing to a few old and worn-out resorts, but rather to give the hunter or angler a general idea of the country he proposes to explore, and of the species and descriptions of game and fish that he will there encounter. The range of locality offered has practically no limits, and hundreds of parties might be in the field at the same time without one coming in contact with another. To this enchanted land of forest, lake and stream, the Iron Mountain Route is the great thoroughfare, and the pages that immediately follow will treat exclusively of the points directly upon its line which are contiguous to good hunting and fishing grounds. Farther on, the reader will be led into a more extended field.



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MORSE'S MILL, NEAR HILLSBORO, MO.

Within Sound of the Locomotive Whistle.

RIDING southward from St. Louis, less than two hour's travel, will carry one to some very good localities for obtaining sport with rod and gun. If the angler has but a few short hours at his disposal, HORINE or HEMATITE might be visited with very good results, for in the small streams adjacent to those two points, fish can be taken representing all the different varieties found in the Mississippi river to which these waters are directly tributary; squirrels, rabbits, and quail abound and an occasional turkey may be discovered in the thicker coverts. Morse's Mill on the Negro fork of the Meramec, west of Horine, is a noted fishing ground for St. Louis anglers, the principal kinds of game fish, taken at that point, being large and small mouth black bass—more commonly the latter—pike and crappie. BLACKWELL, the second station below De Soto, is another point of which fishermen speak well.

The Columbus branch of the Iron Mountain Route, leaving the main line at Bismarck, seventy-five miles from St. Louis, reaches a country renowned for its quail and small game generally, as well as for its fishing streams and the wild fowl that congregate in the proper season along their winding channels. The broad grain fields of Cape Girardeau county are a favorite stopping place for the enormous flights of wild geese, following the Mississippi on their passage southward, while the acres of standing corn left ungathered until the latter months of winter affords ample reason and excuse for the presence of thousands of quail.

ALLENVILLE will probably afford to the wing shot as good an opportunity for the exercise of his skill as a reasonable man could wish. There are a number of lakes in the vicinity where the wild fowl spend their nights, after days that are passed in robbing the thrifty Missouri farmer, and the flight shooting in the morning and evening is excellent. In the low grounds east of Castor, or Little river, there are a great many deer and turkey, while all kinds of small game abound.

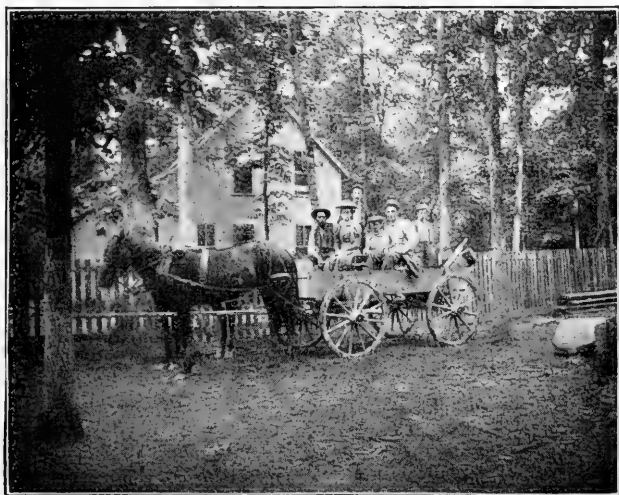
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A NATIVE, ON THE UPPER ST. FRANCIS.

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MILE CREEK and WILLIAMSVILLE are stations on the main line, and are also located immediately upon the banks of Black river, a stream visited every year by hundreds of anglers from a distance. In the interior of the Ozark mountains, west of these points, the Current river tumbles over its bed of gravel and boulders, to join the Black below the Arkansas border line. This is also a splendid fishing stream, noted for the number of small mouth black bass that leap and gambol in its waters. The Current River Club, composed of influential citizens of St. Louis and other Missouri towns, has a



CASTOR RIVER CLUB HOUSE, BUFFINGTON, MO.

club house on this stream, which may be easily reached by a short land tour from either of the points mentioned, or by rail from Williamsville. In the mountains on either side the Current, large and small game is found in comparative abundance, turkeys being quite plentiful, while, with a good dog, it is very little trouble to get a deer afoot in the early morning. The Irish Wilderness, a tract of very broken and mountainous character drained by the Current river, is a favorite resort for many old-time deer hunters who do not object to encountering more or less of hard and rough work

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CURRENT RIVER, NEAR DONIPHAN, MO.

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while in pursuit of their favorite sport. This region is perhaps the wildest in Southern Missouri, but, owing to its distance from the railroad, its detailed description cannot be attempted in the present connection. It is rarely visited by Northern gunners, though accessible by wagon from different points on the main line of the Iron Mountain Route, but the sportsman who penetrates to the depths of this bit of mountain wilderness will be well repaid for his time and trouble.

POPLAR BLUFF, at the junction of the Cairo branch, is a good outfitting point for parties who contemplate a visit to the swamp lands of the upper St. Francis river, and big game ranges of New Madrid, Dunklin and Pemiscot counties. Fishing in the St. Francis, Big and Little Black rivers, and Cane creek is always first class. Bass, pike and crappie eagerly striking at almost any sort of bait or lure, and there is a good deal of small game to engage the attention of the man who loves the smell of burnt powder. Deer were formerly abundant in this locality, but the venison-loving farmer and lumberer have been prominent figures in their disappearance. Poplar Bluff has been in the past the objective point for a good many parties of Northern hunters, and therefore the absence of large game in that vicinity may be susceptible of a dual explanation, and that the local gunners are not alone responsible.

At NEELYSVILLE, a branch of the Iron Mountain extends to Doniphan, situated on the banks of the Current river, a desirable point for quail shooting and bass fishing, with the advantage of having a big game range within a few hour's drive in every direction. Some fifteen miles west of Doniphan, on the Eleven Points river, a branch of the Black, lies a hilly country covered with open woods and a growth of high grass, a favorite range for deer and turkey. Several hunting parties from St. Louis visit this locality annually, while the Current river at Doniphan often contributes its bass and crappie to fill the creels of sportsmen from Missouri's largest city.

Crossing the northern boundary of Arkansas at Moark, the first station of importance is CORNING, a favorite resort for fishermen from St. Louis and other northern points. Black river, three miles to the eastward, has an enviable reputation as a fishing stream, here, as elsewhere in its course, and thoroughly deserves the good opinion

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of the anglers who frequent its banks; while almost within sight of the station Corning lake spreads its placid surface in invitation to the dancing lure and toothsome minnow. The fame of Corning lake surpasses that of other Arkansas waters, because it is oftener fished by parties living outside the State. It is a good place to go



THE BLACK RIVER AT POPLAR BLUFF.

for a few days' sport because of its convenience to the railroad, and the fact that boats are handy and can be had at any time for a nominal sum, but there are hundreds of lakes as good, so far as the mere matter of fish is concerned, scattered here and there throughout the Eastern portion of the "Bear State." Small houses for the convenience of visiting sportsmen have been built at different points on Black river, and as they rent for a trifle, are in many ways pre-

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BLACK RIVER, NEAR BLACK ROCK, ARK.

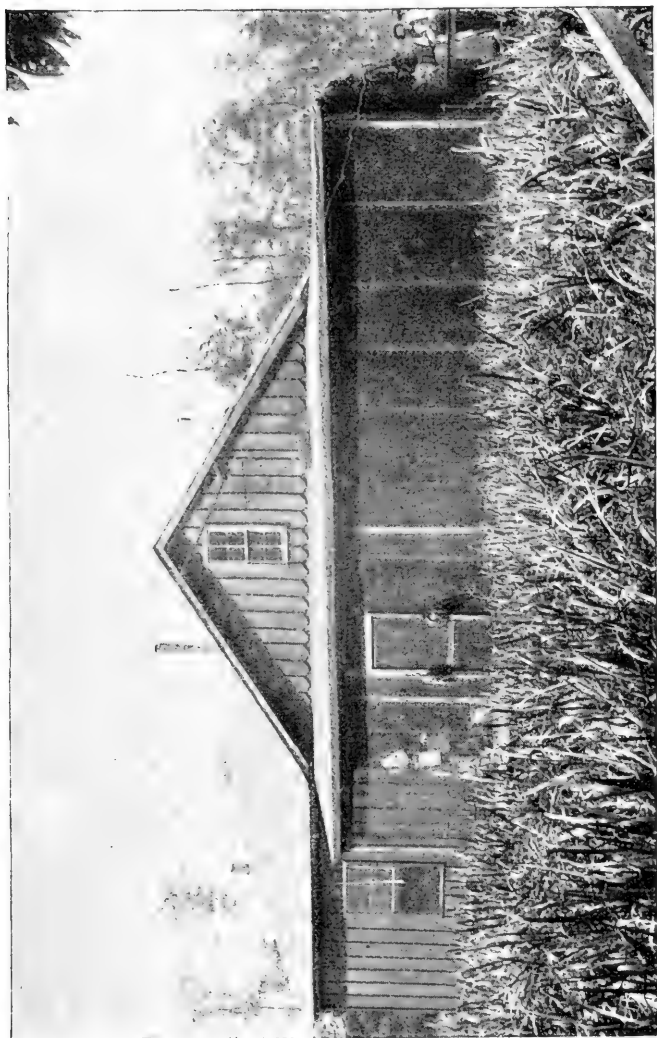
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ferable to the impromptu camps generally erected as a temporary makeshift without regard to the occupant's comfort. The forests in the vicinity are plentifully stocked with squirrels and other small game, and wherever cultivated fields are found good quail shooting is obtainable. As a stopping point for deer hunters, Corning is preferable to Poplar Bluff, and in some years deer are found without difficulty within a few miles of town, being particularly abundant in the tract of country known as "Deer Range," lying east of Black river. An occasional deer can always be found by the persistent hunter, and flocks of turkeys are commonly encountered—this, in point of fact, being the case almost anywhere in the surrounding region.

KNOBEL, six miles farther down the road and beyond the crossing of Black river, is the junction point of the main line of the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern and its Helena branch, and aside from its natural advantages of location in the heart of a first-class hunting and fishing country, is also particularly desirable as a stopping place for sportsmen, since it is provided with good hotel accommodations and is in easy reaching distance by rail of choice fishing and shooting on the St. Francis and L'Anguille rivers. Guides are obtainable here, as well as conveyances for transferring tents and camp outfits to the hunting grounds. Deer, turkeys and squirrels are found within six or eight miles of town, and splendid fishing for bass, pickerel and crappie in Mill, Maiden and Allen lakes, from two to four miles out. Cache river lies six miles to the eastward, and is a stream famous for its game and fish.

Following, to HELENA, a course nearly parallel to that of the St. Francis river, the branch road from Knobel offers to sportsmen a score of stopping places, any of which may be selected with confidence in the results. The famous Sunken Lands of the St. Francis have been so often described in glowing terms that it is quite unnecessary to grant them any of our limited space. Farther down, where the river, confined between narrower banks begins to develop a current and the impassable marshes give place to firmer soil, game is found in undiminished quantity and its pursuit can be followed under more favorable conditions. The name of the "Sunken Lands" is attractive, and it would be difficult to find a section of country

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THE KNOBEL CLUB HOUSE, BERTIG, ARK.

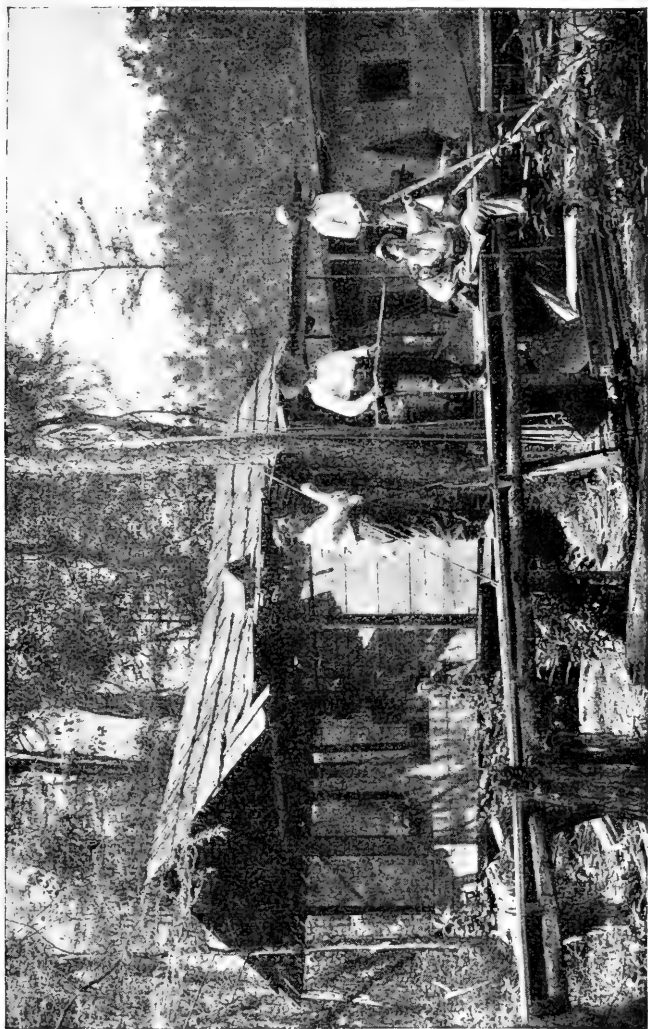
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better supplied with all that adds to the happiness of those who love the wild life of the forest, but all of this—not even excepting the wonderful wild-fowl shooting in season—can be enjoyed on the lower river beyond the limits of this woodland lake.

GAINESVILLE the first town of any size on the branch after Knobel has been left behind, has St. Francis lake in its vicinity which will furnish sufficient employment for the men of rod and reel, while, as elsewhere in this favored region, the gunners will never be at loss for targets upon which to display their skill. BROOKLAND in Craighead and HATCHIE COON in Poinsett counties, stations of minor importance in some respects, are, nevertheless, worthy of remembrance by sportsmen who may contemplate a visit to this portion of Arkansas, for at such points the trails leading to the woods are usually short and often indented throughout their length by the sharp hoofs of wandering deer hungry for a meal of the farmer's peas or sweet potato vines. VANNDALE and WYNNE, in Cross county, are both noted points for deer hunting, while the different lakes in the St. Francis and L'Anguille bottoms, as well as both the rivers just named, afford an inexhaustible supply of bass, jack-salmon, crappie, and the other fishes common to this region.

MARIANNA, twenty-six miles north of Helena, is not far from the confluence of the L'Anguille with the St. Francis, and between these two streams, for some distance above their juncture, is a large scope of unsettled country, at present the chosen haunt of the deer and bear. Here, the gray wolf still pursues his quarry as in the days before railroads had placed this wilderness within twelve hours of the Southwestern metropolis, and the panther's scream occasionally frightens the deer hunter from his stand or silences the sturdy challenge of the wild gobbler. Before the non-exportation laws went into effect, a great deal of game was shipped from this point, and enormous consignments of buffalo and catfish, taken from the adjacent rivers, still go to Northern dealers. Happily the shipment out of the State of other varieties is rigidly prohibited, but the local angler can supply his table, throughout the greater portion of the year, with the choicest of game fish, secured with even the most primitive of tackle from the pool or stream most convenient to his dwelling.

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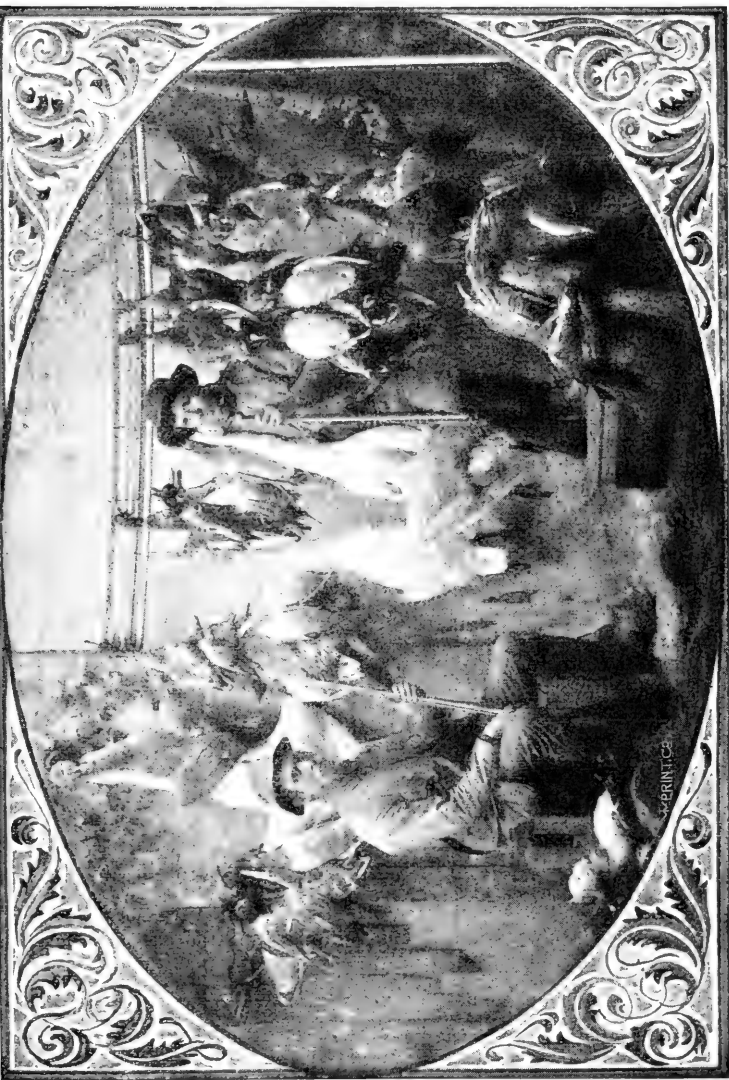
MOARK CLUB, ON THE ST. FRANCIS RIVER.

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Probably 90 per cent of the sportsmen, who may chance to drift down the main line of the Iron Mountain Route beyond Knobel, will drop off at DE LA PLAINE or O'KEAN, feeling convinced from past experience, that the deer they are looking for can be easily found in the white oak flats contiguous to the Cache; if not in the river bottoms proper. The oak forests in the districts between the Black and Cache rivers have been sadly depleted by the axes of lumbermen and tiemakers, but the game still lingers in the old "chop-outs," though the undergrowth, in localities, is rendering its pursuit difficult. Fishing is good at both the points mentioned, but to enumerate the different lakes and small streams within reach would be unnecessary.

From WALNUT RIDGE to Newport, at the crossing of White river, the railroad passes through a belt of country similar in nature to that just described, with Black and Cache rivers about equal distance on either hand. Though settlements are scattered everywhere they are not so thick as to interfere with hunting to any marked degree. The hunter never goes away empty-handed, and when accompanied by hounds often kills deer within sight of the different towns, and turkeys forage the farmers' corn fields daily, while of smaller game there is an unlimited abundance. Walnut Ridge claims for one of its citizens a record of five deer and twenty-five turkeys in one day, a score that will hardly be duplicated soon, but which speaks volumes for that locality as a hunting resort. Wolves, wildcats and small game add zest and variety to the forest sports, and wherever fields of any size are encountered, good quail shooting with or without a dog, is easily obtainable. NEWPORT is perhaps one of the best fishing points in the State, as it is located on White river not far from the mouth of Black and within easy reach of Cache. Bass, salmon, crappie, pike and all kinds of perch are plentiful in these streams, as well as in Burgon lake, only three miles from the city, Gambol's lake about four, and Waldo lake not more than five. On the large farms and cotton plantations in Big Bottom, some twenty miles up the White River branch, and Oil Trough Bottom, directly across the river from the locality just named, the lover of wing shooting can find quail to his heart's content. Here the birds are rarely disturbed by the local gunners, who consider such

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A DAY'S SPORT ON BIG LAKE, ARK.

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small game unworthy of notice, and they are very numerous and easy of approach. BATESVILLE is the terminus of the White river branch, and is located in the edge of the mountainous region that extends over the entire Western half of the State. It is an interesting little city of several thousand inhabitants, located in the midst of attractive and romantic scenery, and the fishing in that locality is unexcelled. Batesville would be a splendid objective point for a summer angling trip, and in its vicinity small game of all descriptions can be taken in quantities, though large game is less abundant than at points lower down the river.

BRADFORD, on the main line below Newport, is in a good locality for both hunting and fishing, being handy to White river and possessed of all the advantages that such proximity supplies, while there is also a first-class deer range in the hills some nine or ten miles to the westward. Big lake, one mile east, and Little Lake, about the same distance south, are both famous for the quantity of fish they contain, as well as on account of their unusual clearness, the bottom of either being visible at a depth of twenty feet. Other lakes abound, furnishing splendid fishing and good duck shooting in season.

MEMPHIS is now the eastern terminus of the Memphis Extension of the Iron Mountain route, and the completion of that branch made accessible, both from the east and west, a large tract of country unsettled and wild, and hitherto inaccessible, but which had long been known to abound in all kinds of game and fish. No point can be said to surpass another for hunting and fishing on this whole line, but at any point the sportsman chooses to embark he will find plenty of food for his ammunition, and fish eager to snap his bait. The first train from Memphis took a party of hunters from that place, and almost immediately on its opening the Bald Knob Rod and Gun Club was organized with headquarters at Earle, where they have erected a club house. The following are the varieties of fish found: Black bass, speckled perch, brim, and pickerel. In game: he will find ample enjoyment in bringing down deer, turkeys, geese, ducks, quail, rabbits, squirrels, etc. BALD KNOB JUNCTION, the western terminus of this branch, was, until the non-export interfered, the favorite hunting ground for a number of market shooters, the flat

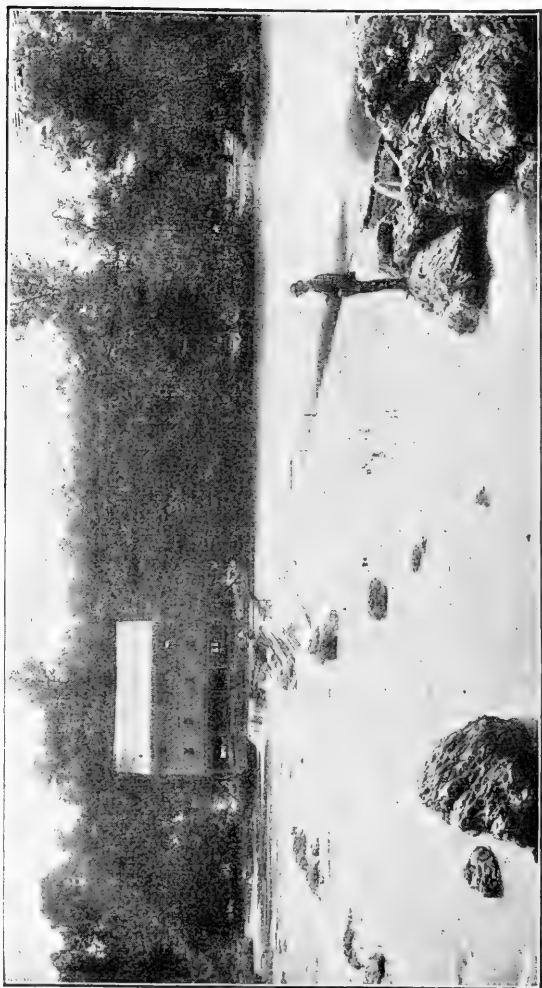
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woods, east of this point, fairly swarming with deer in the winter when the overflow had driven them from the low bottoms of White and Little Red rivers. In the winter of 1888-1889, over two hundred deer were killed within six miles of Bald Knob, and other seasons have seen this score exceeded. A great many bears still roam through the cane brakes skirting the rivers, faring sumptuously upon fresh pork whenever the fancy takes, and occasionally furnishing a feast for the farmer whose smoke-house stands empty by reason of their foraging. A description of the fishing in the neighborhood of Bald Knob would be merely a repetition of an old story. Streams and lakes are of precisely the same character as those mentioned in connection with other points, the variety of fish is identically the same, and the most persistent angler will always secure the fullest creel or heaviest string, for the amount of his catch is decided only by his ability to bait hooks and fight his fish.

From Bald Knob to Little Rock the main line passes through a comparatively thickly settled district, gradually drawing away from the course of the larger streams. In this stretch of fifty-seven miles large game is scarce, though by no means altogether lacking. Quail, squirrels and rabbits afford abundant sport for those who prefer the shotgun to the rifle, and turkeys frequent the field farthest from the farm houses, and find ample cover for the protection of their young broods in the belts of timber that still remain. As the Arkansas river is neared, wild goose and duck shooting is good in the proper season, and many follow it as a profitable business, making five and six dollars a day. This is particularly the case at McALMONT, on the main line, six miles north of Little Rock, and here, too, fishing can be had fully equal to any in the State. Hill's lake, five miles east, is much frequented by fishermen from the surrounding country, while Frammel lake, one mile, Peelar lake, two miles, and Ink bayou, scarcely one-half mile east of town, all abound in bass, trout, pike, and the different varieties of perch. Deer and turkeys are frequently killed in this locality, and all sorts of small game is abundant.

At TRASKWOOD, the first station north of Malvern, the angler will receive intelligence of excellent fishing on every side, but will be somewhat surprised to find that the favorite method of obtaining a

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OUACHITA RIVER AT OLD MILL, NEAR HOT SPRINGS, ARK.

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supply of the silvery-sided beauties is by spearing—or “gigging,” as it is here termed. In the Saline river and its numerous feeders, the water is perfectly transparent, and, however deep the pools may be, the fish are readily discovered, and as readily secured, by an expert hand with the heavy, long-handled spear. At DONALDSON, on the Ouachita, the same method of fishing is generally pursued, though a great many fish are shot with the rifle, in the use of which many of the residents of this vicinity gain a remarkable proficiency. It requires a peculiar training to enable any one to shoot fish in water of even moderate depth with any certainty, but an expert shot rarely misses his aim, and it is no unfrequent feat to shoot a thirty or forty pound buffalo. In all the streams and lakes of this region the water is so clear that a pin can be seen lying at the bottom at a depth of ten feet, and so great is the variety and number of fish that fishing with a hook is rarely undertaken. At Donaldson deer are abundant, and occasionally a bear is found in the breaks of the hills bordering the Ouachita bottoms. Where large game is easily found, it goes without saying, that there is no scarcity of the smaller beasts and birds, and at all points south of the Arkansas river quail and squirrel shooting can be expected without the possibility of a disappointment.

In this connection ARKADELPHIA can be mentioned as one of the best localities in the state for quail shooting, second only to portions of Calhoun and Union counties southeast of Camden. Clark county, in which Arkadelphia is located, has been long noted for the richness of its soil and the uniform success of its cultivators; a goodly share of the county is in cultivation, and in Arkansas wherever there are open fields, quail can be found by the hundreds and thousands. A good many old-time deer hunters reside at Arkadelphia and still own and train their packs of hounds, though deer in the immediate neighborhood of the town are growing scarce and hard to “jump.” The Ouachita furnishes the best of fishing, and in the winter months the Arkadelphian finds abundant use for his shotgun in attempting to halt the flight of the ducks and geese that are following the river’s course.

CAMDEN, mentioned above, is the terminus of the Camden branch and is thirty-four miles from the main line. This is one of the old-

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est towns of the State, and was the supply point for a large scope of territory, in the days before the advent of railroads, when the freight and passenger traffic of the entire country was handled by steamboats. Situated on the bank of the Ouachita, and with Woodward, Johnson, Pine, Moron, Blue and Fisher's lakes all to be reached over good wagon roads in from thirty minutes to one hour, the angler who may chance to visit this town will hardly suffer for lack of opportunity to wet a line in waters fairly aswarm with bass, trout and perch. The hotel accommodations at Camden are excellent, guides easily obtainable, and choice hunting grounds for large and small game close at hand.

BOUGHTON, on the main line a few miles below Gurdon, is in a good range for all-around hunting and fishing, the little Missouri and Antoine rivers and Cypress bayou, with other smaller streams and lakes supplying the wants of the most exacting of anglers, while all varieties of game common to the States abound. At Hope, a short branch line leads to Nashville, a prime point for all who love the best of sport. Red and Little Saline rivers, Little river and the Little Missouri are all convenient and easy to reach, and the hunter who penetrates their thickly grown bottoms should keep on the alert for a shot at the largest of Arkansian game. Deer and wild turkeys are too common to deserve special notice, and bears and panthers are frequently encountered. WASHINGTON, the first town reached on the branch, is but little further from the big game range and has excellent quail shooting in its vicinity. FULTON is another good stopping place for sportsmen, its location on Red river making it a particularly desirable point for those who wish to get good fishing within rifle shot of a hotel, with an almost endless-range for hunting on either hand. Little river, which enters Red a short distance above Fulton, can hardly be improved upon as a fishing stream, and its name is connected with half the bear-hunting yarns told by the Nimrods of Southern Arkansas. Deer can be found both in the river bottoms and among the pine and oak forests of the flat lands and ridges, but still hunting is rarely resorted to—the majority of the resident hunters preferring hounding. Turkeys are about the only other game generally hunted, though the woods are

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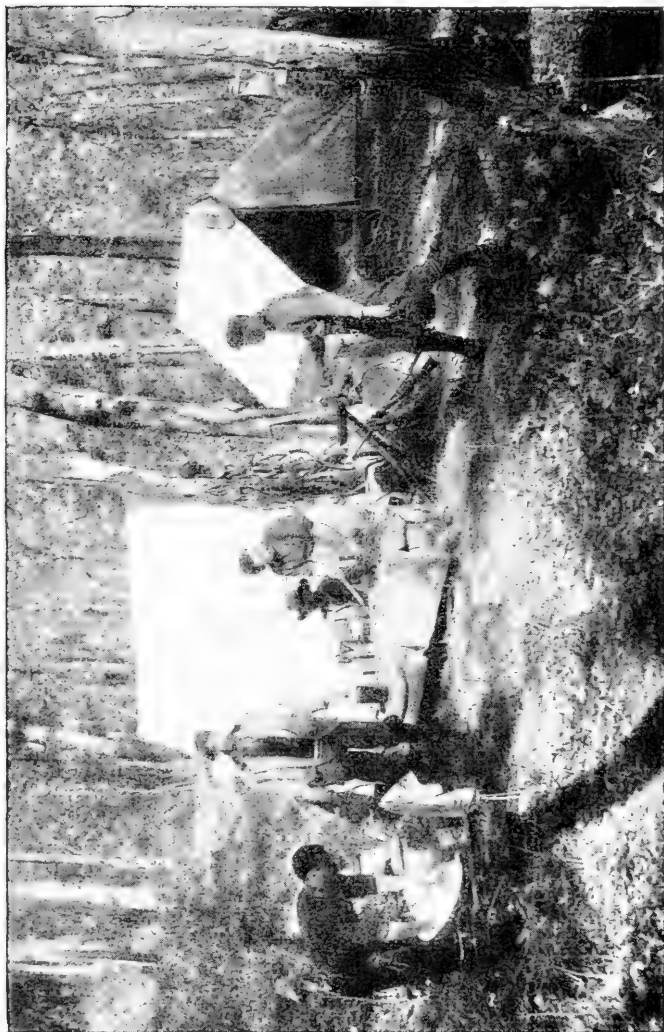
full of squirrels and rabbits, and the call of the Bob White echoes through every clearing.

CONWAY, MORRILLTON and RUSSELLVILLE are points on the Little Rock & Fort Smith division, and all of them report good fishing in the Arkansas river, as well as in the numerous small courses, that have their source in the Boston mountains, flowing into the Arkansas from the north. Small game is plentiful, and deer and turkeys can be found in the hills a few miles back from the river, though not in any great numbers. PINEY, further west, is a more desirable point for hunting than any of those just mentioned, and for fishing is, perhaps, as good. Quail, squirrels and rabbits abound, as at all other points in the State, and deer are frequently killed on Big and Little Piney creeks at no great distance from the railroad. Wild geese and ducks are plentiful on the sandbars of the river in the winter seasons.

SPADRA is the first station on the Little Rock & Fort Smith division west of Clarksville. Spadra creek is fed by mountain springs. Its waters are as clear as crystal, and abound in mountain trout and a fine variety of perch. The scenery along this stream has long been noted for its beauty and picturesqueness, its rocky banks resembling an Adirondack stream. The Arkansas river is near, where all the larger varieties of fish are found. In hunting, deer is the largest game. Turkeys, ducks and squirrels furnish ample sport for the hunter in their season. Higher up on the mountains great sport is afforded in hunting the gray fox, which is very plentiful and valuable for its fur.

FORT SMITH is the western terminus of the Little Rock & Fort Smith division, and the region around about, especially to the north, south and west, is one vast hunting and fishing paradise. The streams near the city, in which black bass, pike, crappie and catfish abound, are Lees creek, Vache Grasse and Frog bayou in the State, and the Poteau and Illinois rivers and Vian and Salisaw creeks in the Territory. The fishing is excellent, but for genuine sport the hunter, with his gun and dog, has the call here. This sport is not confined to any particular locality, but parties are organized and excursions are made a hundred miles to the north, south and west, all of which territory is a vast hunting ground

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HUNTERS' CAMP, OZARK MOUNTAINS, NEAR HOT SPRINGS, ARK.

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abounding in all kinds of game. The hunter will go prepared to shoot deer, foxes, turkeys, quail, ducks and chickens. Local sportsmen are to be found who are always ready to join and assist in expeditions of this kind.

There now remains to be described the different points of interest to sportsmen along the Houston, Central Arkansas & Northern line, a branch of the Iron Mountain Route, at present extending from Little Rock to Alexandria, La., a distance of 305 miles. This line, through a goodly portion of its length, is of comparatively recent construction and renders accessible a vast stretch of unbroken forest but little known to hunters from the outer world—a hunting ground of more than ordinary merit, where the larger game can roam as far as their fancy dictates without finding their way barred by the settler's fence or encroaching upon the cleared fields that tell of civilization's irresistible march. The road follows, for the first part of its distance, a course parallel to that of the Arkansas river, though running from one to fifteen miles to the southward of that stream. Then, turning abruptly to the right, it bears away directly through the heart of Louisiana, passing through some old, long-settled farming districts, and, finally, plunging into the depths of the largest unbroken body of pine forest that the United States now contains, to emerge at last on the banks of the Red river at Alexandria. Every station in the entire distance deserves some share of our notice, for each has its surroundings of forest and stream; each its enthusiastic sportsmen, proud of their own hunting grounds and loath to concede that there are better farther on. But what of space will forbid mention of many points that might well rank with the best.

WRIGHTSVILLE is twelve miles south of Little Rock, on the Arkansas City division, and, as a center for hunting and fishing, is unsurpassed. It is three miles from the Arkansas river, two and one-half miles from Horseshoe lake, and one mile from Pennington lake, which is fed by Fish creek. Pike, bass, cat, white perch, trout and sun-fish are on the constant lookout for the fisherman's hook. Commencing at Pennington lake and extending westward to the Saline river is an expanse of uninhabited region known as the Pennington Forest. This is composed of pine and cypress timber, with large

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tracts of jungle and cypress brakes. Deer and turkeys have their favorite haunts here and small game abound in unlimited quantities.

REDFIELD is on the Arkansas City section south of Wrightsville. Deer, turkeys, squirrels, rabbits and quail abound in large quantities in that vicinity, and the hunter will not have to go beyond a radius of ten miles from town to satisfy his desire to kill something. In the way of fishing, Harris and Lipscomb lakes, the Arkansas river, Bitter Camp and Harrison creeks, are all within three and a half miles of Redfield and are well stocked with black bass, trout, jack perch, catfish and buffalo.

JEFFERSON SPRINGS is between Little Rock and Pine Bluff, on the Arkansas City section, and has for fishing waters the Arkansas river and its bayous, in which are found catfish, perch, black bass and several other varieties in abundance. The woods in this vicinity have plenty of deer, foxes, rabbits, opossums, squirrels, and, in their season, turkeys, geese ducks and quail.

PINE BLUFF is the most important city on the Arkansas City division, and is the center of excellent hunting and fishing territory. The Saline river, Atkins lake and Clear lake abound in mountain trout, speckled perch, black bass, catfish, etc., and splendid camping facilities are to be found around these lakes. The shooting is also fine, and deer, turkeys, squirrels, rabbits, grouse, quail and ducks are easily bagged. Occasionally a bear may be met, but they are becoming scarce. Foxes are so common that fox-hunting has ceased to be sport for the old hunters. The winter is very dry and pleasant, and after the first of October this is a veritable hunter's paradise.

NOBLE LAKE, on the Arkansas City section, has in its vicinity the Arkansas river, Atkins lake and Noble lake, which are well stocked with trout, catfish, buffalo, speckled perch, white perch and sun-fish. The whole country about this place is a vast hunting ground in which are found large quantities of deer, turkeys, squirrels, rabbits, foxes, geese, ducks and quail.

Leaving Noble lake behind, an ideal deer country is found near VARNER, the third station beyond. The timber growth, which between Little Rock and Pine Bluff was principally pine, has changed

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again, and the broad flats lying along the headwaters of Bayou Bartholomew are wooded with the different varieties of oak, gum, elm and hickory. The undergrowth is rather close here for rifle shooting, but a shotgun answers as well at close quarters, and around Varner it is unnecessary to risk long range shots. Turkeys are quite plentiful, as they usually are in a region where pine-oak acorns cover the ground in autumn and winter, and the wild blackberry ripens its fruit in early summer. Squirrels are everywhere. On the Arkansas river, north of the town, and across the river at the mouth of Bayou Meto, a good many bears can yet be found, but they are hunted persistently by market gunners, who ship their meat to Pine Bluff and Little Rock, and their numbers are rapidly decreasing.

DUMAS is a station of small importance in some respects, but the residents of the little town are sportsmen, and they live in a locality where they can gratify their fancy for deer driving to the utmost. The stranger in their midst, if possessed of a taste for such sport, would be heartily invited to join in their wild rides after the fleet-footed and evasive buck, and it is nothing uncommon for a hunting party to kill twelve or fifteen in a single day.

WALNUT LAKE the next station to Dumas, has an enviable reputation as a fishing and duck shooting resort. The lake is deep and clear, and its beauty, quite as much as the fine fishing it affords, attracts numerous parties from as far away as Little Rock. A shooting club from the State's capital has a club house on the bank of Walnut Lake, and it is occupied pretty regularly during the hunting season.

WINCHESTER, a few miles farther on, claims the reputation of shipping more deer during the open season than any other station in Arkansas. In 1890, two men, hunting principally at night with headlights, killed 145 and 87 deer respectively. That this wholesale slaughter did not "utterly extinguish the breed," is evidenced by the fact that twenty-six deer were shipped from Winchester on one train in the fall of '92, and hardly a day passed that shipments of less consequence were not made. The hunting grounds extend pretty generally in every direction for a number of miles, but the *best* is to be found between the railroad and Arkansas river some fifteen miles

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Scenery on a Deer Hunt in the Wisconsin

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away. Bears and wolves are often killed by the deer hunters, and turkeys and small game are to be had "in quantities to suit"—if such a phrase is applicable here.

DERMOTT is situated in the midst of a scope of wild country lying between Bayou Bartholomew and the Mississippi river, and possessing an inexhaustible supply of game of all descriptions. There are many so-called good hunting grounds where the citizen with non-observant habits, or the stay-at-home farmer, will tell you that game is "pow'e'ful sca'ce," but the good people of Dermott are all willing to confess that the woods around them are swarming with wild life. The fact is so patent that they cannot help observing it. Even a blind man, if served with three meals of venison per day for a series of months, would, in the end, be forced to admit that there must be more or less deer in the vicinity, and there are ways in which the mentally blind may be made to see. Fishing in the neighborhood of Dermott is good, bass, trout and perch being the principal varieties that interest anglers; but buffalo and cat, of the largest size, abound, while small fry, such as crappie, perch, etc., snap greedily at the baited hook as soon as it touches the water. Mason's, Barth's and Big bayous, and many lakes, large and small, are close at hand, and it is not far to Bartholomew and the Mississippi.

MORELL and PORTLAND the latter near the Louisiana line, are both good points for parties to visit in search of choice shooting and angling, Dobson's Ferry, on Bœuff river, twelve miles southeast of Portland, being a notable place for game and fish even in this "land of plenty," where deer skins are tacked against the side of every cabin, and fish are so plentiful that hooks and lines are unnecessary for their capture. The "deep water" in Bœuff river ranges from ten to forty feet for a stretch of eighteen miles, and it runs through a belt of forest nine miles wide without settlements.

The transition from the southeastern corner of Arkansas to one of the northernmost parishes of Louisiana is all unnoted, for the general character of the country shows no change. It is the same dead-level country shadowed by giant oaks and gums, exhibiting the great fertility of the soil where cultivated, by prodigious yields of the corn and cotton, and elsewhere by the rankness of the under-

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growth and wild vegetation. A map of this region shows that the country is cut up by a perfect network of water-courses, many of them small, but all large enough to contain fish, and in Louisiana, where there is sufficient water to conceal a bass or crappie, you may drop a baited hook with a certainty of getting a bite. But little game is exported from this State, on account of its remoteness from the principal markets of the North and East, and, until of late, because there were no lines of railroads over which it could be shipped; and though the conditions are now changed, it is probable that the State Legislature will take action to prevent the indiscriminate slaughter by market hunters of the wild beasts and birds. So it is possible that Louisiana may retain the distinction it now holds of possessing within its limits more game than any other State in the Union.

BONITA and GALLION may be enumerated among the points in Northern Louisiana that would particularly deserve the attention of sportsmen. The same large streams that we first encountered many miles up the line are here, to insure success rewarding the angler's efforts; the same forests, the same descriptions and abundance of game.

MER ROUGE, situated in the heart of the rich prairie of that name, has nothing but small game in its immediate vicinity, but a short trip eastward or westward brings one again to the virgin forest with its original denizens and primeval beauties.

From Monroe to Columbia, thirty-nine miles, the railroad follows the course of the Ouachita river. The greater part of the land immediately adjacent to the river has been in cultivation for a score of years, and if one was to search the world over it would be difficult to find a country where quail are more abundant or as seldom troubled by sportsmen. Back from the river larger game abounds—a fact easy to understand when one takes into consideration the fact that the nearest railway station east of Columbia is Grand Gulf, in Mississippi, sixty miles distant, while it is over one hundred miles west to Grand Cane, the closest point in that direction where the game-scaring whistle of the locomotive can be heard.

Crossing the Ouachita near Columbia, the road enters the pine region of Louisiana, estimated to contain forty billion feet of milling

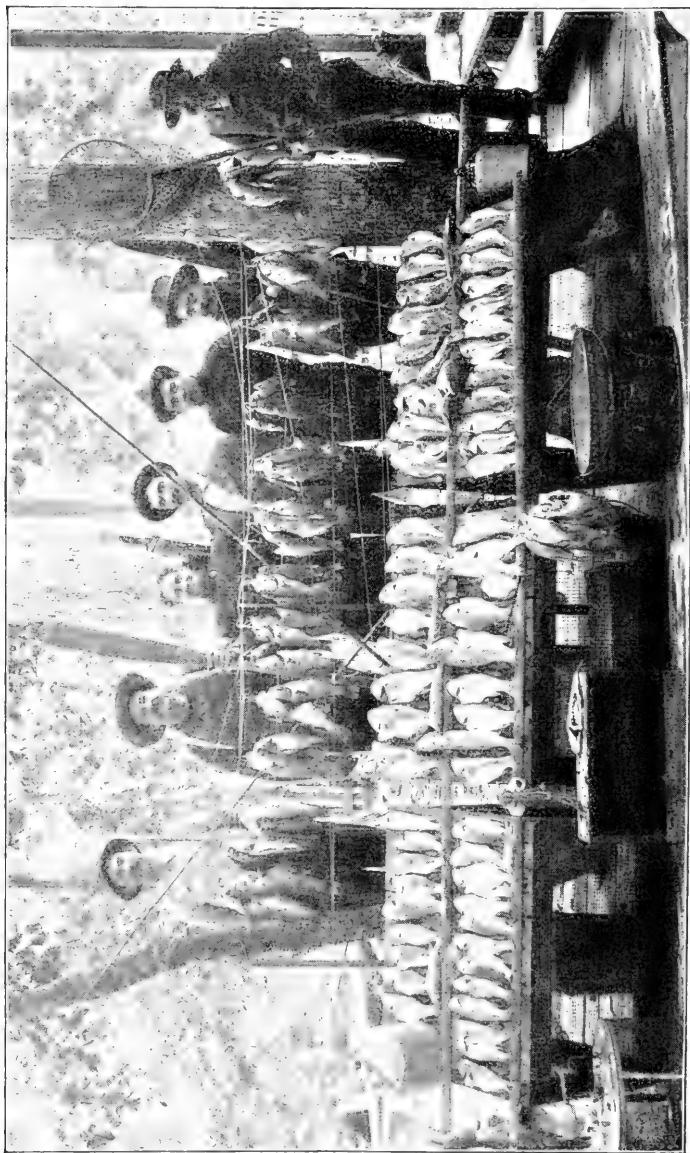
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pine in addition to an incalculable amount of other choice woods, such as oak, ash, gum, poplar and cypress. To estimate the amount of game sheltered by this magnificent forest would be a task from which the rashest of statisticians would shrink. The only way in which it is possible to form even a faint idea of the facts, necessitates a visit to the country itself and a sojourn there of days and weeks. Between Columbia and Alexandria, sixty-nine miles, all the improvements are entirely new, the timber work being about the only industry carried on in the entire district, and the different stations located at or near mills and for the convenience of the mill men solely. Any point, selected at haphazard, will serve admirably as a stopping place for sportsmen, and plenty of game and fish will certainly be found in the immediate neighborhood.

TULLOS boasts of as good deer shooting as the country affords, though the claim is contested by stations both above and below this point. Near here, at junction of the Castor and Little rivers, the fishing is undoubtedly as good as Louisiana, or the world, can show. Bass, crappie, perch and bar fish fight each other for the possession of the baited hook thrown in their midst, and the angler in telling of his catch, roughly guesses at the weight instead of keeping tally and memorizing the number of fish taken. The one might be forgotten, but the other he can get at approximately at any time by "hefting" his string.

Howcort City, perhaps, has the best territory around it, and the deer in that vicinity may be a trifle more plentiful and easier to approach than at other points up and down the line. The surrounding woods are very nice for rifle shooting, being comparatively open and principally of pine with no low limbs to impede the catching of a quick sight on a running or standing. The railroad men, when they get a day off for a hunt, usually stop at Howcort City, and as they have a very good opportunity to hear of the best hunting ranges, it is fair to assume that they have a reason for selecting this place. Among the hunters who are thoroughly acquainted with woods, from two to five deer per day for each gun is not considered above an average score. Turkeys are quite plentiful, and along Little river, in the swampy bottoms it is an easy matter to find and kill a bear. The people in this region do not take small game into consideration

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A CATCH AT CASTOR RIVER CLUB.

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when speaking of what their forests contain, but nevertheless it is here, and its presence is discovered as soon as one gets a hundred yards from the little patch of open clearing in which the depot stands.

POLLOCK, the third station above Alexandria, deserves especial mention, because here the sportsman can find all the varieties of game common to this portion of Louisiana. At the same time it is only a few miles from Catahoula lake, where the man who has lost his bear can always find it—or another one; and if he should prefer to dispense with bear meat and take alligator steak instead, he can likewise be accommodated. Catahoula lake is surrounded by a veritable wilderness and is a great resort for water fowl of all descriptions, many of them spending the winter along its marshy shores. Of fish it is unnecessary to repeat what has already been told and retold a score of times.

ALEXANDRIA at the head of low-water navigation on the Red river, is in the center of the pine district of Louisiana, and consequently in the center of the best game range of the State. Profiting by the possibilities of rapid transit that the railroads centering in Alexandria allow, the sport-loving citizens of the town are often afield, and game, fresh from the woods, and that never saw the interior of a market, regularly graces their well-furnished tables. Of varieties, the list is long, including bears, deer, turkeys, coons, 'possums, squirrels, rabbits, geese, ducks, quail and a dozen species of waders, such as snipe, plover and curlew, all of which winter, to some extent, in this latitude. Fishing, in the Red river and a hundred smaller streams and lakes, supplies abundant occupation for those who prefer the angler's "pensive craft" to the fiercer joys of the chase. The north-bound train on the Houston, Central Arkansas & Northern leaves Alexandria in the early morning, and it is quite common for parties of hunters to run up as far as Howcott City or Pollock, kill from three to six deer and return on the evening train. Plume hunting has long been a source of profit to the gunners of Monroe and Alexandria—a great many semi-tropical birds nesting in summer along the lower Ouachita and Red rivers.

It is difficult to understand why the hunting grounds of Louisiana are not more frequently visited by sportsmen from Northern and

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Eastern States. Distance cannot be adduced as a reason for this neglect of the best deer range now in existence, for the city of Alexandria is only 638 miles from St. Louis, and is consequently nearer by several hundred miles than the hunting grounds of Colorado, Wyoming or Montana. In Arkansas and Louisiana, while judicious game-protective measures have been adopted and are generally respected and enforced, the open seasons are long, and the privileges allowed can be thoroughly enjoyed. Here the severity of winter storms or the impediment of snow drifts twenty feet in depth never intervene to hinder the hunter in pursuit of his game. Taking the season through not a single day need be lost from sport by reason of icy winds or penetrating cold, and, better than all the rest, the sportsman who wanders in this direction in seach of recreation, when returning home is never compelled to stop *en route* and search the city markets for woodland trophies that he has failed to obtain in a more legitimate manner.



UNCLE RASTUS STARTING FOR A POSSUM HUNT.

Along the Waterways.

The facts given in the preceding pages have been compiled for the benefit of sportsmen who have but little time to spend in hunting and fishing excursions, and naturally desire to reach and return from the woods with all possible dispatch. There are many such, and each year there is a marked increase in the number of those who have learned that it is possible to enjoy a fair amount of wild life in the Southern forests without the sacrifice of valuable time. But there is a still larger class whose members believe that time spent in healthful recreation is not lost, and prefer to work the harder during eleven months in the year that the twelfth may be their own to dispose of as they please. Such men may be found in nearly every community, and, as they are the most ardent exponents of the gospel of health and innocent pleasures, their presence is easily discoverable. There is no taint of petty exclusiveness about the true sportsman. His heart is too large to permit him to monopolize the good things of life. He is no misanthrope, to scorn the companionship of his fellow men, but, instead, the brotherhood of true sportsmanship is the broadest and most comprehensive in nature. Therefore we find that the hunter or angler, who spent last season in some delightful region well stocked with game and fish, will not only return there again when the proper time arrives, but he will be accompanied by one or more friends, less fortunate than himself in the past, and who are now to learn for the first time the real meaning of enjoyable sport. Every day during the autumn months, such parties pass Southward over the Iron Mountain Route, and among them there are many faces that the veteran conductors recognize at a glance—faces that have become familiar by reason of their reappearance, as regularly as the seasons roll around, during a half score of years.

Such "old-timers" usually carry with them their camping "outfits," and go prepared for a stay of several weeks' duration. They have

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FLOATING CAMP ON SWIFT WATER, MO.

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engaged in advance the services of a guide, have located, through his aid, the present whereabouts of the game, and therefore know exactly where their tent will be pitched, and possess a certain knowledge of the woods and waters among which the succeeding weeks are to be passed. With abundant time before them, they are not restricted to the confined ranges in the vicinity of railroad stations, but can venture out into the wilds. They are not dependent upon railroads or other hired means of conveyance, for a few dollars will procure them a batteau, skiff, or John-boat large enough to float their belongings, and, thus provided, the secret places of the swamps and mountains are open to them.

The States of Arkansas and Louisiana are traversed by a network of streams, all navigable by canoes and other small craft, and many by the larger class of Mississippi steamboats. They are the sportsman's natural waterways, and their number is legion. Most of them are crossed by the Iron Mountain Route, or some of its branches, and, in consequence, parties of hunters and anglers, after a few hours' run from the cities of Memphis and St. Louis, can cut themselves adrift from the busy, everyday world, and float out into the forest dreamland in search of the pleasures that lie hidden in nature's chosen retreats. The majority of the streams are yet unexplored by tourists, and thus it is impossible that their itineraries should be given. In the greater number of cases the smaller streams are yet untravelled save by the rude boats of timbermen and trappers, and every turn in their winding course reveals new objects of interest to the appreciative explorer.

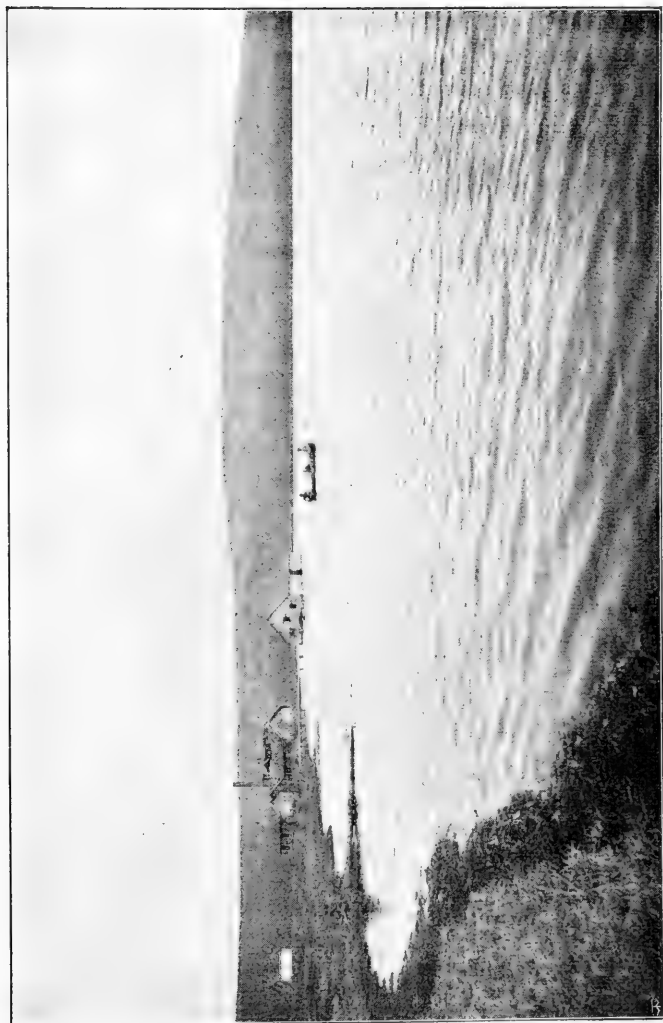
After crossing the Meramec, a few miles south of St. Louis, the first stream of importance encountered is Black River. The railroad runs parallel to its course from Mill Springs to a short distance above Poplar Bluff, where it crosses, only to cross back again at a point between Corning and Knobel, some thirty miles farther south. Canoes and batteaux can run the river from Mill Spring, but Williamsville is a better point for starting on a river trip. From Williamsville to Poplar Bluff, the stream is quite rapid, and this portion of the run is quickly made. Then follows a stretch of still water, to the head of Big Island, where Tom River cuts across a great bend to

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enter the main stream, miles below. At this point, the current increases, but below Big Island it grows slack again, and to make speed, it is necessary to do considerable hard paddling until the junction with Current River is reached, when the remainder of the long voyage can be floated leisurely over without difficulty. Black River has been long and favorably known by hunters and anglers, but in most instances they have only visited points along its course, and it is to be doubted if its entire length has ever been run by a party of sportsmen. Yet, it is a trip that would repay bountifully the necessary expense of time and trouble. The river traverses below Williamsville, Wayne and Butler Counties in Missouri, and Clay, Randolph, and Lawrence, in Arkansas, also forming the boundary between Independence and Jackson Counties to the point where it enters the White River at Jacksonport. It is well stocked with game fish throughout its length, runs for nearly the entire distance through a good game country, and a canoe voyage down its winding course would be an experience worthy of being remembered while life lasts.

The White river is by all odds the grandest of Arkansian streams, and particularly so if viewed from a sportsman's standpoint. Rising in the Boston mountains, it sweeps in a grand curve through the wildest region of Southern Missouri, re-enters Arkansas, and winds for hundreds of miles amid the most picturesque scenery of the central States, bordered on either hand by rugged hills and frowning cliffs, until, after passing Batesville, it hides itself in the canebrakes and swamps, and steals cautiously along to its far-distant confluence with the Mississippi. The thorough exploration of this stream would occupy the better part of an entire season, and though the current is rapid, and the channel clear, it would take several weeks to traverse the river from source to mouth, even in the swiftest running of canoes. For such a trip, the sportsman should provide himself with a variety of arms, and a well-filled tackle box, for he is certain to come in contact with game and fish of all descriptions known to this vast region. The head of White river can be reached by a short wagon trip across the mountain from Ozark, a station on the Little Rock & Ft. Smith Division, but the upper stream is so narrow and

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LAKE CHOTEAU, NEAR IRON MOUNTAIN, MO.

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rapid, that its navigation would be difficult and attended by something more than a spice of danger. Twenty miles from its source, White river is still a mere thread of surging silver, boiling and foaming around and over great boulders at the bottom of a sunless gorge; but every ravine in that favored country has its spring-fed rivulet, and as each adds its tribute to the larger stream, it swells in volume, until, in time, it becomes more worthy of its ambitious title.

Shortly it is joined by War Eagle Fork and Kings River, either of them nearly as long and as large as the so-called Main White, and then the river loses in a measure its turbulent nature, grows broader and deeper, and its course becomes less tortuous and rock-impered. Canoeists who have traversed the more rapid streams of the North Woods and Canada, would doubtless enjoy tracing out the wanderings of this erratic waterway, and in the rugged defiles of the Boston mountains would find many things worthy of their attention. If, in their everyday home life they have come to know the value of the different varieties of marketable lumber, they will, no doubt, feel interested to find that this region still possesses great groves of giant walnut and cherry and millions upon millions of feet of the choicest white oak; if they are mineralogists, they will trace with enthusiasm the outcroppings of lead, zinc and other metals; if they have a fondness for subterranean explorations, they will find the hills honeycombed with caverns of unknown depth and extent. At all events they will know no periods of enforced idleness, for they will be traversing waters as yet unwhipped by the angler's fly, and on either hand, the forests will offer an abundance of game of all descriptions.

Below Fayetteville, the valley of the White widens, and for a time the craft of the voyagers will float between gentle slopes given up in a measure to the cultivation of grain and fruit. A few leagues farther on, however, the character of the country again changes, towering bluffs abut directly upon the stream, and it becomes a succession of rapids. From this point onward, for many miles, progress will be sufficiently rapid to please the most restless of minds. Ever onward, the great volume of crystal water rushes, past

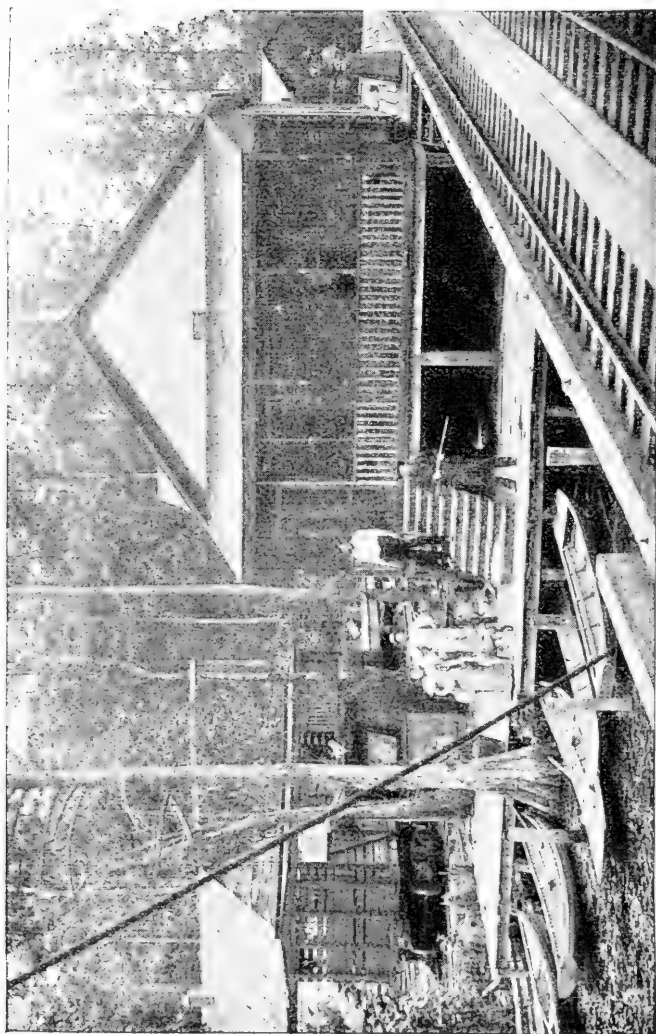
IDEAL HUNTING AND FISHING GROUNDS.

Eureka Springs, crossing the border line into Missouri, past Forsythe, the head of high water steamboat navigation, through Stone and Taney Counties, rich in romantic scenery, and replete with traditions of guerilla warfare, and the Bald Knobber troubles, until, by a southward turn, the State line is again reached, and the explorers find themselves once more in Arkansas.

Meanwhile, the White has been joined by numerous tributaries of importance, and at Lone Rock, under the shadow of Mount Matney, the North Fork comes in, bringing with it the drainage of that great hill region known as the Ozark Mountains. The White has now become a river indeed, grand in volume and resistless in current, while its scenery surpasses that of the upper Hudson. The mighty stream rolls onward between beetling cliffs, its silent depths admitting the passage of large steamboats, and anglers will find that its waters are figuratively alive with the finest of game fish. Passing on, the sportsman should stop and admire the famous painted rocks at Calico Bluff, and if he desires to make a short excursion inland, he would do well to visit the limestone caves on Sycamore Creek, and the manganese mines near Cushman. He may cling to his shotgun meanwhile, for it is well to remember that so long as he is in Arkansas, he is never out of reach of game, and the best of sport is sometimes encountered when least expected.

At Batesville the White passes into the low grounds of Eastern Arkansas, and the mountains are left behind, but the hours spent by the tourist in this the first half of his voyage will never be forgotten. He is now nearly two hundred miles below the upper limit of steamboat travel, counting as the river runs, and most of this distance has been traversed amid scenery surpassing that along any other navigable stream east of the Rocky mountains. Of Arkansas' mountain scenery, very little is known outside the State, but a rich harvest awaits the literary wight who shall first catch with his camera and describe with facile pencil the many points of beauty and interest lying along the cliff-shadowed White, between its source and the point where it leaves the hills to wander through forest and brake to the distant Mississippi.

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BUFFALO ISLAND HUNTING AND FISHING CLUB, BERTIG, ARK.

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Up to this time the voyager has had occasion to use a shotgun more frequently than a rifle, but after passing Newport, some miles below the mouth of Black River, he enters the big game country proper, and, if he started upon his trip in the early autumn, it is now in the height of the deer shooting season. All his surroundings are changed. Instead of hills and rocks, he is now passing through a dead level country, diversified only by cypress swamps and stretches of cane-brake. Much of the land on either side of the river is subject to annual overflows, and if he should sojourn in this country until the dead of winter, the sportsman will probably awake some morning to find himself in the midst of a woodland sea. Passing on down the broad stream, he occasionally encounters plantations, and now and then a town of some consequence, but during the greater part of his course, he is surrounded by a perfect wilderness, in which the only signs of human presence are the high stumps that tell of the visits of cypress choppers, and an occasional half-wild cow or hog, only momentarily seen as they dash away in frantic terror at his approach. It is a long run from Newport to Augusta, where the Memphis branch crosses the river, and the next town below is Des Arc, one of the oldest places in that portion of the State, but possessing fewer inhabitants now than in the good old days of steamboat traffic, twenty years ago. The next town is Devalls Bluff, at the lower end of Grand Prairie, then Clarendon, Mt. Adams, Crockett's Bluff—the chosen home and hunting ground of Colonel Bob Crockett, grandson of that great hunter and statesman who died for Texan independence in the Alamo—Indian Bay, and St. Charles. Forty or fifty miles below this point, the Mississippi is reached, and the long voyage is at an end, but from Newport to this point the hunter and angler has discovered so much of attractive country, and his time has been so pleasantly passed, that it is safe to say that no party will ever accomplish the entire trip in a single season.

The Buffalo Fork of the White River, rising also in the Boston mountain region, is in itself worthy of extended notice. It is a typical mountain stream, and one of the most turbulent in the State. Its navigation has been attempted, but never successfully. Several

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years since, S. D. Barnes, a well-known writer for the sportsman's journals, accompanied by Harry Esslinger, another woodsman of experience, essayed its exploration, were caught in one of its many dangerous rapids, and barely escaped with their lives, losing their boat, camera, and other valuables. Buffalo Fork enters the main stream some twenty miles above the mouth of North Fork.

Cache River takes its head in the swamps of Southern Missouri, and runs in a southerly course, entering White River at Clarendon. It runs the entire way through the flat woods and swamps, and its navigation is impeded by drifts of fallen timber, except after the commencement of the winter rains. The Knobel Branch of the Iron Mountain Route crosses it at Cache Station, and it can also be reached from different points on the main line, Walnut Ridge being the most desirable place to outfit for a long trip. With light wooden or canvas boats, the stream could be easily traversed, and the deer or bear hunter could hardly undertake a more promising trip.

The hunting and fishing along the St. Francis has been mentioned at length in another connection, and it is unnecessary to dwell upon it here. The stream has more than a local reputation, and the forests along its course can be conscientiously recommended to visiting sportsmen who love wildfowl shooting, or are anxious to try their rifles on large game. In only a few instances have Northern hunters visited the country along the lower St. Francis, and much of this vast region is comparatively unknown.

At Judsonia, the railroad crosses Little Red river, a stream noted for its abundance of fish. Its source is in Van Buren and Searcy Counties, and from its head spring to its mouth, is deserving of the notice of hunters and anglers. The river is navigable by small steamboats as far as Searcy, but above this point it is very rapid and shallow, running over a gravelly bed. An enjoyable trip would be from Clinton, in Van Buren County, where boats could be built or purchased, to some point on White River, thus affording a variety of sport, from angling for small mouth black bass to shooting deer and bear in the blue cane of the swamp region.

Fishing and wildfowl shooting is generally good on the Arkansas, from Ft. Smith, where it enters the State, to its mouth, but as the

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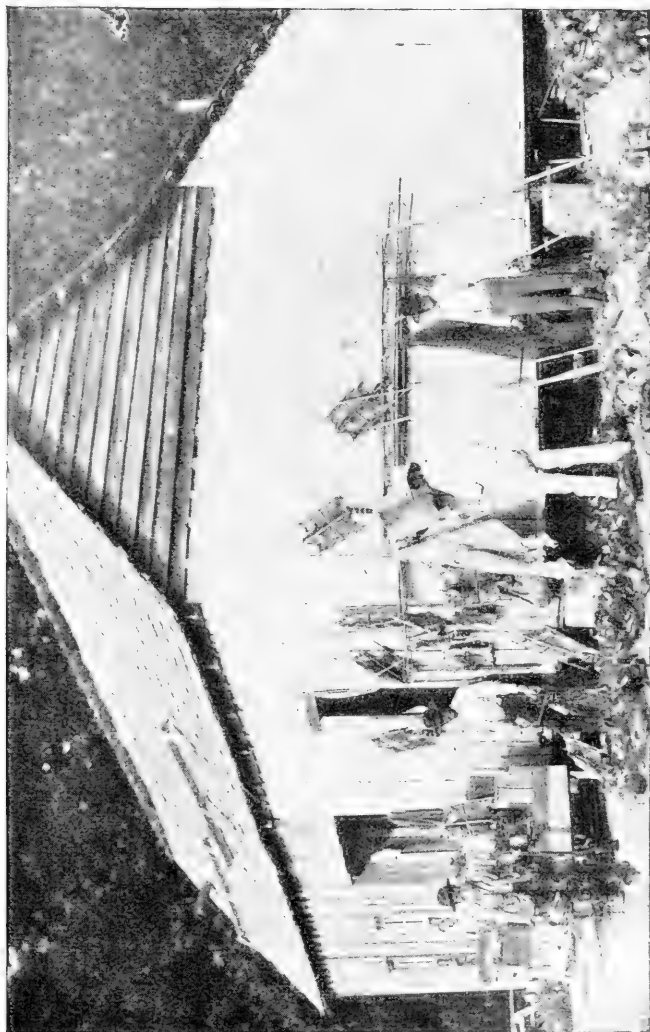
LOWER HINSON LAKE—CASTOR RIVER CLUB.

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river runs a greater portion of the way through a rich agricultural region, most sportsmen prefer visiting a stream with wilder surroundings. Still, after passing Little Rock, there are broad stretches of swampland abounding in deer, bear and other large game, and it is a well-known fact that some of the best hunting grounds in the State lie contiguous to this its largest stream. The best part of the river for the hunter of big game is found between Pine Bluff and its mouth, and the sportsman who visits that locality will find he has made no mistake in the selection of a hunting ground.

In the regular enumeration of Arkansas rivers crossed by the Iron Mountain Route, the Saline properly comes next, and though little known to sportsmen, it is as well deserving of attention as many of its sister streams. It is a tributary of the Washita, and a river of considerable length, taking its rise in the hills south of the Arkansas, and flowing in a southeast course through Saline, Grant, Cleveland, and Bradley Counties, in all of which the wild lands furnish an ample supply of deer, turkey, and smaller game. The Washita, or Ouachita, as the name is spelled along the lower course of the stream, is in reality the grandest river of Southern Arkansas. It heads in the mountainous wilderness of Montgomery and Polk Counties, a country renowned for its big game, and flows in a southeasterly course over gold-bearing sands to its junction with Red river, in Central Louisiana. To describe its many windings, or to treat with any degree of prolixity of the country it traverses, would necessitate the use of more space than can be given the subject here. It is fed by many subordinate streams, the most important being the Caddo, Little Missouri, Bayou Moro, and Saline, in Arkansas, and the Bayou D'Arbonne, Boeuf river, and Black river, in Louisiana, and could be navigated by cabin boats at any season of the year from a point far above Hot Springs. The Washita Valley is credited with affording the best quail shooting to be had in the South, and there are deer and turkey in abundance in the wild lands along the entire length of the stream. The best deer shooting in Louisiana is probably in the pine woods adjacent to the Washita, and in the country around Catahoula Lake, a region easily accessible by the branch of the Iron Mountain Route, now extending to

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TOM NEEL'S PLACE, BIG LAKE, ARK.

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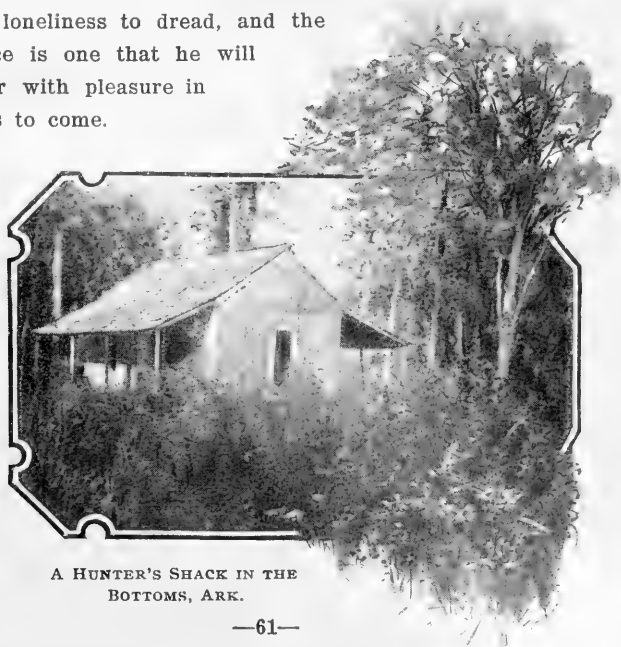
Alexandria in that State. It is a country but little visited by sportsman tourists, who, as a rule, are content to enjoy the hunting and fishing to be found nearer home, but in a few years, Louisiana will be given recognition as she deserves, and be generally admitted as being the best game country in the Union. Anglers and hunters should, before deciding upon their plans for a coming vacation, examine a good map of Arkansas and Louisiana, trace the course of the Washita river, and fully consider its claims upon their attention.

The Red river, and its tributary known as Little river, are both well worthy of a visit. Little river has a reputation known all over the State for the size and number of the black bear that frequent the brakes along its banks, and through the country it traverses a good hound can jump a deer at any time on a few moments' notice. Hounds are almost indispensable to the hunter on these Southern streams, as the thickets are very dense, and most of the shooting is necessarily done on runways, and ahead of dogs. Hunting packs are kept by nearly all local gunners, whose cooperation can be readily obtained at a small expense. It is rarely advisable for the sportsman to carry his own dogs with him, for they are troublesome, cause a great deal of expense in transportation, and if valuable should not be permitted to run in a country infested by wolves, panthers, and droves of wild hogs, more dangerous to canine life than either. Setters and pointers that are not wide rangers will be in little danger, since their owner's presence will act as a safeguard, but if they are in the habit of making long casts for game, or if they should have a fondness for chasing Mollycottontails, it would be better to leave them in the safety of their kennels, since otherwise they are more than apt to "come up missing" before the hunt terminates.

Speaking in a general way, if the sportsman intends to confine his wanderings to the hill regions of Missouri and Arkansas, he need only supply himself with a light shotgun, and a supply of fishing tackle, but if he ventures down in the swamps, it is necessary to bring a firearm heavy enough for the largest game, and, above all, a good, reliable pocket compass. The importance of this precaution will, perhaps, be better understood and appreciated from the statement that the woodsmen best acquainted with the country usually

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carry compasses, while those who do not, very often wish themselves better provided. In the overflow regions, there are practically no permanent landmarks, except the windings of the streams and the location of the scattered lakes. The country is everywhere the same, a succession of overcup and gum flats, cow oak ridges and canebrakes; and as the ridges, so-called, are elevated only a few inches above the surrounding country, the importance of keeping one's correct bearing becomes self-evident. The action of the overflow moves the fallen timber in every direction, and a log which once pointed directly towards camp may be turned in exactly the opposite direction before the next season comes around. To adopt an old Texan axiom, which in its original freshness related to a "six-pistol": "A fellow may go a long time without needing a compass, but if he ever does need one, he needs it powerful bad." However, the hunter who travels by canoe or skiff, and keeps close to the stream in his rambles, will avoid in most instances the discomforts of losing himself; and even if forced to spend a night beyond the sight of his camp fire, he has nothing but enforced loneliness to dread, and the experience is one that he will remember with pleasure in the years to come.



A HUNTER'S SHACK IN THE
BOTTOMS, ARK.

Game of Texas and the Gulf Coast.

THE Iron Mountain Railroad affords the most direct through route to the Gulf Coast, where, from the mouth of the Mississippi to that of the Rio Grande, the lagoons and inlets swarm in winter with myriads of water fowl driven by the harsh breath of old Boreas from their nesting grounds in the far North. With the first days of November, brigades of teal and wood ducks (the skirmish line of the legions to follow) make their appearance as if by magic, and a few days later their numbers are recruited by scattered flocks of mallards and pin-tails. Later on the red-heads and canvas-backs follow; then the geese, and, last of all, a noisy rear-guard of cranes. Meanwhile the grassy marshes, back of the line of sand dunes, are filling up with clouds of plover and snipe, while herons and white plumed egrets stalk in their midst like staid but curious giants inspecting an army of pigmies. Game birds and wild fowl, they are all here, after having run the gauntlet of a thousand guns; but their safety is far from being assured, for sportsmen will go far to enjoy exactly the sort of shooting that can be had here, and modern methods of travel have placed the utmost limits of American territory within easy reach of the gunner of only moderate means.

In the shallow water, beyond the broad reaches of shell-strewn sand, huge tarpons are sporting amid the shoals of mullet, their great scales reflecting back the rays of the sun with that white lustrous glow that has won for this monarch of game fish the title of "Silver King." The charm of angling with rod and reel for fish with the fighting qualities of a bass and the weight of the largest of Mississippi "cats," annually attracts many fishermen to the gulf towns of Louisiana and Texas, but they are in other ways amply repaid for their long journey and the fatigue of many hours spent on the water. Mullet, sea trout, Spanish mackerel, bluefish, pompano, and a host of other fishes, are as plentiful as "top-swimmers"

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in a "back North" carp pond, and red snapper can be taken farther out where the water attains to the depth of ten or twelve fathoms.

Galveston bay, Matagorda bay, and other points where tarpon fishing is usually good, can be reached via the through Pullman service on the Iron Mountain system; and from Galveston, Velasco, Rockport, Aransas Pass and Corpus Christi, the most popular fishing resorts of Southwestern Texas can be visited by short railway trips through a region unexcelled for its fresh water fishing and wing shooting. From Alexandria a line has lately been built to Watkins at the mouth of the Calcasieu river, or Calcasieu Pass, and here, too, good fishing can be obtained, as well as the choicest of shooting at nearly all varieties of feathered game.

Aside from its angling and wild-fowl shooting, Texas offers many attractions to the visiting sports, for in many places its western prairies still abound with antelope and deer. In the mountain ranges adjoining the Pecos and Rio Grande there are Mexican lions, leopard cats or ocelots, and bears, while occasionally droves of peccaries or Mexican hogs are encountered, though they are now becoming very scarce and hard of approach. Lobo wolves and coyotes are commonly found in all that vast region west of the Brazos and would afford excellent sport if hunted with properly trained hounds. Of feathered game, the uplands in the interior of the State can still show a fair sprinkling of turkeys, and there are localities in which prairie chickens are abundant; but quail is the game most commonly hunted, and they can be found by thousands everywhere. The mesquite prairies between San Antonio and the coast fairly swarm with them, and among so many localities where they can be readily killed in any desired numbers it would be difficult to name one possessing particular advantages.



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HUNTERS' CAMP, NEAR HOT SPRINGS, ARK.

The Best Place of All.

IN selecting a locality for an outing the sportsman should take into consideration the size of his party and past experience of its members, and the length of time that it is proposed to remain in the woods, as well as the kinds of game or fish to be taken, and the methods to be secured in taking them. If deer hunting is the prime object of the trip, and rifles the weapons intended to be used, it would be well to wait until late in the season, when the leaves are down and it is possible to secure standing shots with time for deliberate aim. Therefore the scene of the hunt must be located outside the overflow lands, because at that time of the year the deer have been driven from the overflow by the high water. On the other hand shotguns are most effective before the leaves have fallen, or in the thick cane of the bottom lands, for there is nothing like a handful of buckshot for quick work at close quarters. Again a party of men thoroughly unacquainted with the "ways of the woods," would be better off encamped in the midst of a wilderness with a guide to look after those that lose themselves, than if more comfortably domiciled at some boarding house in a railroad town with saddle horses to carry them on long daily jaunts through the best territory available.

There are places where still-hunting is possible, and others where it is difficult to kill deer without the aid of dogs to chevy them from the thick undergrowth and cane. In a word, whatever style or manner of hunting may be desired, it may be easily and certainly found within a radius of a few miles from any of the big game ranges in the preceding pages. To choose at random among the points endorsed as "good" will be like investing in a lottery that has no blanks and many capital prizes, but it is a course that can be adopted without misgivings, while it is needless to say, that it lies beyond the power of mortal man to name the "best of all places," though this little bit of information is earnestly required with the first move towards preparing for the autumnal hunt. It is well to bear

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in mind, however, that the best hunting for big game is usually found in the neighborhood of the larger rivers, and that while deer and turkeys may be found in the vicinity of first-class quail shooting, this plump and fleet-winged little game bird is rarely in the lower bottoms where the annual overflows forbid successful farming, and the black bear and panther roams the brake in fearless freedom.

The angler may select the scene of his outing anywhere along the larger streams of Arkansas and Louisiana, and without misgivings of the success that awaits him. If he comes from a distance, and especially if his visit is made in the early spring months, he should select a locality where he will be convenient to lakes in case rains and consequent freshets should interfere with fishing in the streams. He should come well provided with good, strong tackle, and should not pin his faith to one lone rod, however much of a favorite it may be. There are "rod-breakers" in the waters of "Old Rackensack," and in those of the State which joins it on the south, and it is always well to provide for contingencies.

If the sportsman should desire more specific information than these short paragraphs afford him, it would be well to get in correspondence with some resident hunter able and willing to act as his guide, and trust to him the arrangement of the campaign and the selection of its scene. This, for reason stated further on, can be recommended as the best possible course to pursue. While guides may not be strictly classified as necessities to a well-regulated hunter's camp, they are luxuries that most sportsmen can afford, particularly as their presence often proves a saving in time and labor, and generally secures success in attaining the object sought.



General Remarks.

AS a rule, sportsmen who intend remaining in the woods for any considerable length of time, usually prefer to build a cabin or pitch a tent in some desirable spot where they can enjoy themselves to their heart's content, and in their own way, isolated for a space from the outer world and heedless alike of its cares and customs. Perhaps, in no other way can the majority of hunters and anglers enjoy, to so great an extent, the pleasure of a long anticipated, and oftentimes, hard-earned vacation. Granted a comfortable tent fitted with all the necessities of life, and located in the midst of a region teeming with game and fish, and the sportsman will come to appreciate more thoroughly than ever before how few and fleeting are the hours that lie between the rising and setting of a November's sun. There is a subtle charm about camp life that wins its way with all. The frugal breakfast, hurriedly prepared and as hurriedly discussed before the stars have faded in the west, is more tempting to the palate than an epicurean feast, while the long, pleasant evenings, when tired limbs are stretched in the camp fire's glow and the incidents of the past day are lived over again, will linger in the sportsman's memory until sturdy saplings have sprung up through the ashes that once sparkled before the tent, and hands that held rifle and rod with nervous grasp are palsied with the frosts of age.

But though the establishment of a permanent camp has its important advantages, there are drawbacks that are also worthy of consideration. Many of the best points for hunting and fishing are difficult to reach when encumbered with a heavy tent and camp equipage. More than this, big game will sometimes drift from a locality where a short time ago it was quite abundant (and this, too, without any apparent reason for such a move); and after everything has been made snug and comfortable about camp, there is a natural and strong reluctance to pull up stakes and seek other and more promising fields. A good deal of this annoyance can be avoided by

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postponing the hunt until the season is well advanced and the acorns have begun to fall, for, after the "running" or mating season is at its height, deer are not liable to change their feeding grounds if the food supply is ample to supply their wants. November first is perhaps quite early enough for deer hunting in the latitude of Central Arkansas, though the season opens three months earlier, and the game is easier of approach than after the date mentioned. Before tis time, however, the movements of game are so uncertain that the most experienced of hunters are frequently puzzled to account for them, while to foresee them is quite out of the question. The fact that game was abundant in a certain range last year or the year before, cannot be accepted as positive proof that it will be found in that locality this year in the same abundance. There are nine chances in ten that such will be the case, but the tenth chance should not be overlooked. It is just here that the services of a guide become invaluable, particularly for parties who are making their first visit to the woods; while in the case of those who have already some acquaintance with the residents of the locality they propose visiting, the same end can be gained by writing in advance to some hunter for specific information.

A very good method to pursue upon a first visit to the woods, or at any time when the sportsman has not more than a single companion, is to secure lodgings with some accommodating farmer or timberman and turn to account his knowledge of the neighboring forests. Many of the settlers own well-trained deer and bear dogs, and the outlay of a few dollars will secure the co-operation of the dogs and their owner, thus changing a mere chance of killing game to something approaching a certainty. Of course there is ever an element of uncertainty existing, until the hunter has proven by actual tests his ability to kill game when it is run "right slap over him," but when the cause of failure rests with the sportsman himself he is not apt to blame the country, its game, or the parties who induced him to visit the one in search of the other. In case a hunting party consists of three or more members, unaccompanied by a guide, it is still advisable to pitch their tent close to the dwelling of the timberman or farmer aforesaid, and for reasons previously mentioned.

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A third plan of procedure is to build a cabin-boat near the headwaters of one of the streams and float downward with the current, finding something of interest to the sportsman in every mile of its course. A skiff or large canoe is sometimes used in place of the larger craft, accomplishing a longer distance in a specified time, but entailing more of hardship and exposure upon the voyagers. The size of a cabin-boat is only limited by the width of the smaller streams in which it is to be used, or by the amount of money set apart for its purchase or construction, and its cost is comparatively small compared with the advantages of a floating camp of ample size to furnish living and sleeping room for three or four men. With such a craft the choicest of hunting and fishing grounds can be reached, and as the fall rains flood the low grounds, forcing out the deer from their summer range, the creeks and bayous afford splendid cruising grounds, with assurance of a rich harvest on the outlying cane ridge now transformed into miniature islands, each with its four-footed Crusoes awaiting the subsidence of the floods.

In this connection it will, perhaps, be interesting to read the account of a cabin-boat trip down White river, undertaken and accomplished in the autumn of 1892, by two sportsmen from a Northern State. The particulars, as given, were originally prepared by one of the gentlemen for publication in a sportsmen's journal, from memoranda jotted down on the "voyage," and may be accepted as mirroring with remarkable fidelity the every-day occurrences of a delightful trip.



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WHITE RIVER, NEAR NEWPORT, ARK.

A Cabin-Boat Trip Down White River.

ALLAN started southward October 28, and three days later I followed to join him at Little Rock. My train into St. Louis was late, and I had scarcely time left for purchasing my ticket over the Iron Mountain Route and attending to my baggage, but by a good deal of rushing, I managed all right, saw everything stowed in the baggage car and my Irish setter tied to the biggest trunk, and was climbing into the smoker when a thought suddenly struck me. Allan had proposed wiring me at St. Louis of any change of plan. Possibly I had been a bit neglectful in not inquiring for a telegram.

A rush to the Western Union's room; back to the smoker, and then the train was under motion. I had found a telegram—luckily it was prepaid, for I would have had no time for making change. Tearing it open, I read as follows:

“To FRANK S., Union Depot, St. Louis, Mo.:

Stop at Newport. Have got a sure thing worth millions.

ALLAN D.”

This was highly encouraging, though somewhat vague; nevertheless, I was glad to learn that there was even a *prospect* of sport ahead. I consulted my folder and found that Newport was on the main line, at or near the crossing of White river, eighty-five miles north of Little Rock. Then I lighted my cigar and puffed complacently until the conductor came along, when I acquainted him with the change in my destination and requested him to share the information with the monarch of the baggage car. After this I felt entitled to a bit of intelligence in return, and, as it happened, the conductor was able and willing to answer in a very few words the half dozen queries that I propounded.

“Yes; good place to stop off. Hunting everywhere. All sorts of game, from bear to snowbirds. Go up towards Batesville if you

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want quail — see you've got a fine dog in the baggage car. Better hunt deer, though; there's more fun in it. Next — Ticket, please."

I smoked, inventoried my fellow passengers and found a fair sprinkling of sportsmen — incipient or pronounced — but none from Arkansas; and then went back to the sleeper till the porter aroused me at five o'clock with the information that Newport was only thirty minutes away.

It was not yet day when we slowed up at the depot, but Allan was on hand, and had a drayman ready to take my baggage.

"Where's Pat; did you bring him?"

"He's in the baggage car. How's the pup?"

"Square as a barrel-hoop. Here, you fellow, look lively there and get the trunk over. There, I'll lead the dog and take your gun. Bring your grip in your hand."

"How far's the hotel?"

"Hotel, nothing; it's a country residence, and we're sole proprietors. Come on — right across the track."

The drayman drove away to a crossing farther down, but we lugged our loads across a half-dozen tracks, stumbled a few yards over soft, yielding turf, and found ourselves on the bank of a big river, the farther side of which was obscured in the gloom. Below us I could see the gleam of flowing water, and a dark blotch that looked like the roof of a house with a glow of ruby-colored fire-light showing through a foot square window.

"Hello, Bud! Lend a hand with this luggage, will you? The bank is a bit steep for us greenhorns."

It was a "bit steep" — if straight up and down is "steep" — and how the two trunks were lowered down that twenty foot bluff I never learned. Of my own descent I shall say nothing, save that it was accomplished with all due celerity, and that the momentum I acquired carried me over a short gang plank, through a narrow doorway, and almost over a small kitchen stove that was unexpectedly encountered. I don't think the stove was injured in the collision, for it stood sufficiently rigid to repel my charge, but it was certainly the warmest stove for its size and looks that I ever saw.

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I stumbled to a folding cot, and sat down to collect my scattered thoughts, while Allan busied himself collecting the contents of my grip, which had suffered more than its owner. A small brass lamp was burning dimly on a rude table in one corner of the little room, but its light was insufficient, so Allan lighted a campaign torch swinging by a wire from the ceiling. Then I had an opportunity for looking around, but could gather no satisfactory knowledge from the scrutiny.

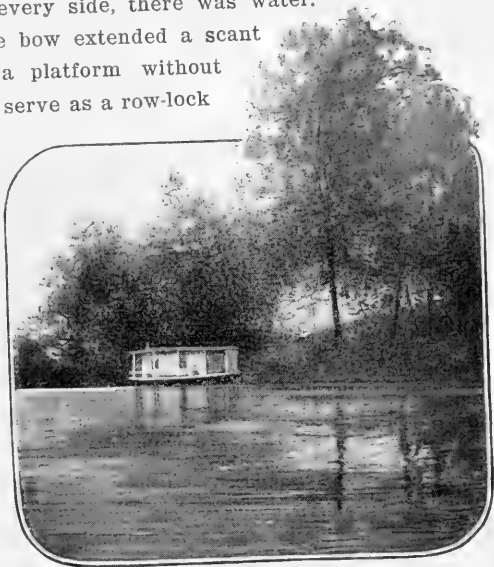
"Cabin-boat," said Allan, replying to my look of inquiry. "She's small, but I think she'll answer. Twenty feet long, over all. Twelve foot beam. Cabin, twelve by twelve."

So this was a cabin-boat. In an ordinary state of mind I might have understood all this; but just now I was slightly rattled.

"It was a happy thought of mine—don't you think so? I just stopped off here a minute to look around, and the first thing I saw was the 'Palace.' That's her name, you know."

I was growing more and more mystified. I opened the door and attempted to pass out, but paused at the threshold. In front of me, and seemingly on every side, there was water. Beyond the doorway the bow extended a scant four feet, nothing but a platform without bulwarks, a stout pin, to serve as a row-lock

on either side, while the long oars hung on hooks over the door. It was daylight now, and I could see that the boat had cast loose from the shore and swung into midstream, heading downward. On the left bank were the white walled houses of Newport on the right a



HOUSE BOAT ON WHITE RIVER, ARK.

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thin fringe of willows and sycamores; beyond them an opening which might be a cultivated field or a swampy lake, I could not tell which. My two trunks were on the boat's bow—extremely close to the edge it seemed to me; Pat, the Irish setter, still chained, crowded between them. In the water, dead ahead, floated a tree trunk with one ragged limb that threatened to rake dog and trunks from the boat. I made a step forward with some hazy idea of averting the catastrophe, but just then the craft on which I stood swung sharply to the right, passing the obstruction without touching.

"Who's steering this ark?" I inquired of Allan, who had joined me.

"Bud, the former owner of the Palace. He is a fisherman and a trapper; one of three who built the boat on upper Black river, intending to spend the winter in the woods. They reached Newport all right, and then the other two went on a spree, and are locked up on a charge of attempt to kill, which will insure them warm quarters until the spring term of court. I bought the craft of Bud for twenty dollars, and for twenty more he is to stay with us till our hunt is over."

We went back into the diminutive cabin and called Bud to join us. He was a typical backwoodsman, tall and lank, with straw colored beard that clung closely to his lantern jaws, and spread, in a thin fringe, over the breast of his black overshirt. His age neither of us attempted to guess, but he was certainly past middle age, and though his strength was considerable, his movements were commonly slower than those of many an octogenarian. He shook hands cordially, spoke flatteringly of the "purty dorg" I had brought on board with me, examined my hammerless Greener, and commented on the "sure enuff wire barrels," and then busied himself in the preparation of breakfast, while Allan and I got my trunks inside, and took Pat back to the dry goods box, at the stern, which he was to share in company with Allan's "Pup," a foxhound of uncertain age, but many accomplishments.

Meanwhile the boat had been floating at will with the current, broadside and stern on, as often as in the proper way, but Bud was

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keeping a weather eye open, and if danger threatened from contact with either shore or a floating log, a powerful sweep of the single steering oar would set us right again without delay. At length, after a glance ahead, our "Man Friday" informed us that a "hull passel" of ducks were floating close to the right shore, and that we were fast nearing them. Here was a chance for a first shot at Arkansan game. The ducks were certainly there, and if there was not a "hull passel," there must have been at least a *half* of one.

"Mallards," muttered Allan; "Let her float on till they rise; then pick your bird and make a sure shot."

But the ducks did not rise. Perhaps they thought our craft was a "runaway" without crew or pilot; at all events, they just sidled out of our way a bit with the evident intention of letting us pass. Just as we were even, we sprang into view, with a yell that put a hundred wings in instant motion, and our first barrels rang out together. I don't know how many ducks fell, for the number of those down were augmented next instant by a second harvest from the demoralized flock, but there were ten plump mallards to retrieve when the smoke had cleared. Bud gathered them in with the aid of a canvas boat that lay, already stretched, on the sloping roof of our cabin; and as Allan and I piled them together in a heap on the floor, we registered a vow to shoot no more ducks until the day before our return, and I am glad to say that we kept our resolutions in spite of temptations such as few gunners are ever called upon to resist.

"We're gittin' clus ter ther railroad bridge," said Bud a few minutes later. "There's good quail shootin', in a big field on ther right. Ef you'll take that bird dorg of yourn in that field, you'll kill a bushel in an hour." I looked at Allan inquiringly, but he shook his head.

"We're not here to exterminate all the small game in the country," he said, "big game is what we're after, and outside of killing a few squirrels or birds for our own use, we'll stick to big game exclusively. Just now our larder is pretty plentifully supplied with fresh meat"—with a glance at the pile of mallards—"and I favor letting the quail slide." And so they slid.

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That night we tied up our boat in an eddy at the mouth of a dry slough, undoubtedly quite a river itself in a time of high water. We had floated many miles during the day, but the river's bends were many and sharp, and it seemed to us that our actual progress had been but small. Bud assured us there was game in the vicinity, and so, more to please him than for any other reason, we landed and made a short detour through the woods.

The sun was down, but enough of daylight remained to permit us to examine the footprints, marking the soft earth on every hand, but our ignorance of woodcraft prevented us from gleaning half the significance of the tell-tale marks. There were squirrel tracks everywhere—we recognized those at a glance. Then there were other tracks of the same size, but rounder and deeper; others longer and resembling the print of a baby's foot, except that the marks of long claws were plainly evident. "Minks and coons," remarked Allan.

By this time I had made a discovery of more importance and I was not long in making the fact known. A bear had walked along the water's edge, in the soft mud. Bruin had entered the water, presumably to drink, then waded along for a distance, and returned to the cane, heading towards the river. The tracks were not particularly fresh, but the fact of their existence was quite enough for us. Further on the discovery was duplicated, and as there was a noticeable difference in the size of the tracks, our spirits rose still higher. There was certainly two bears in the vicinity—or there *had* been within the last forty-eight hours.

"We'll look for them in the morning," said Allan, as we turned away. "It's too late to find 'em to-night."

"Lucky for us that it is," I replied, "for we haven't a charge of buckshot with us."

It was a fact. In Bud's anxiety to drive us ashore, he had hurried us out with nothing in the way of ammunition, save the shells in our guns. Four loads of duck shot in a range where bears were as plentiful as flies in August.

We again pushed our way across the cane ridge, but the forest of "fish poles" seemed taller than before, and we were longer in

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reaching the farther side. At length we burst forth into an opening, but it was only a narrow one; a sort of dry slough, with the cane beyond higher and thicker than ever.

"We've missed our way a little," remarked my friend. "Suppose we follow this slough, it is easier walking and must lead us to the river."

We turned to the right in the direction indicated, and then something happened. In the midst of the rattle of flying hoofs and breaking cane four shots rang out in quick succession, and we stood in mortified silence looking blankly in each other's faces. I was the first to speak.

"It was a big buck. I saw his horns."

"And we shot him with chilled sixes," replied Allan. "Let's go back to the boat."

That was our first shot at deer. We were both willing and anxious to tie up at that particular landing for a month, or until we had loaded the boat with venison and bear meat; but Bud, in his superior wisdom, willed that it should be otherwise. He admitted that there was *some* game in the vicinity, but not enough to "fool" with. It would pay us to drop farther down the river where the bottoms were wider and big game more plentiful. So we floated on, occasionally landing to kill a squirrel or two—for we had given our ducks to a trapper who had passed by, going up the river in a dugout. The canvas boat was kept floating at the stern and proved very handy on many occasions, particularly when we wished to make a landing to inspect marks on the shores that our keen-eyed boatman suspected of being deer or bear tracks. A half dozen times we found spots that seemed, from all indications, to promise favorably for sport, but Bud was intractable and doggedly kept our craft in mid-stream, aiding the current at times with the long bow oars.

"No use stoppin' afore we reach Ergusty," he would say. "Thar's *some* game along hyar, but we'uns want a heap of it."

At length, Augusta was reached, and as we passed under the bridge of the Memphis Branch, we both heaved sighs of relief. We were a mile or two ahead of the cabin-boat at this point, trolling from the canvas boat for big mouth black bass and catching a good

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many more than we cared to keep; but the river had a renewed interest for us now, and we dropped our rods and pulled on rapidly.

Pulling on until we fancied ourselves as far as Bud could drift by midday, we landed on a sandbar, lifted our boat out and tilted it endwise against a log so that our guide could not pass without detecting it. Then we sallied forth in search of adventures, bearing directly away from the river through the open bottom—for there are broad belts of open oak woods interspersed between the cane brakes and lakes, and we had accidentally struck one of these clear strips, locally known as “overcup glades” from the overcup oaks that constitute their principal timber growth.

The earth was hard and dry, for it was too early for the fall rains and not a respectable shower had fallen for weeks. A good many deer tracks could be found, but they were all very old. If a deer had passed that way within a week or ten days the closest of scrutiny failed to find evidence of the fact. Yet there were deer—lots of 'em—as we afterwards found, in this very range that we had stumbled upon by the merest chance, and it was not many minutes before we had ocular proof of their existence.

Without the slightest warning, a deer stood before us in the open glade and not a hundred yards distant. He may have been lying down and arose at the sound of our approach, or he might easily have been feeding there in plain sight of us both for several moments before we saw him, for we were walking with extreme caution and there were but very few fallen leaves to rustle beneath our feet. However, we did not stop long to speculate on how the deer got in his *present* position. The fact that he was *there* was quite enough knowledge for one dose. We were content to accept matters as they stood and ask no questions.

When the hero of a dime novel draws a bead on big game of any kind, the rifle barrel “trembles and wavers for an instant and then becomes rigid as a bar of steel.” The barrel of my 45-90 was exactly as “rigid” as the aforesaid steel bar, but after it “wavered for an instant” it began wabbling and describing eccentric circles, making wheels, as it were, of which the deer constituted the hub. I dropped my arm, drew a long breath and then tried it again, but with no better results.

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"Shoot, you idiot!" whispered Allan, fiercely, "He's going to run."

I pulled the trigger, and, sure enough, the deer ran. I had expected to see speed exhibited by a frightened deer, but this one managed to exceed my expectations. I emptied the magazine of my repeater, a short magazine holding only five cartridges — but when our game passed out of sight, around the end of a mudhole thickly grown with elbow brush, he was traveling as briskly as ever.

I expected that Allan would comment on my poor marksmanship, but he had nothing to say. Instead he offered to carry the now empty rifle, and there was a certain peculiar twinkle in his eye that made me suspicious of the friendliness of his thoughts. Was it possible that he was hugging himself over my ill-luck and looking ahead to the time when the first deer should be slain, and by his own unerring hand. I believe it was this thought more than any hope of having touched the deer that prompted me to follow on and look for signs that my shots had taken effect.

There was no blood where the game had stood when first discovered. A few hairs were scattered among the fallen leaves, but Allan suggested that they had been rubbed off against a tree as the deer turned. Further on we found where one of my bullets had entered a persimmon sapling eight feet from the ground.

"Shooting too high," said I, "I have heard that that is a common occurrence with inexperienced shots."

Allan said nothing, but pointed to a long furrow plowed in the earth a few yards beyond. I thought of accounting for this low shot by the fact that I had not raised my sights, but as it was made at point blank range — if there is such a thing — I concluded to hold my peace, and I was glad I did so when, on going around the pond we stumbled on the deer lying dead, with a bullet through the ribs from side to side, and another bullet hole in the left flank, ranging forward and lodging against the shoulder. This must have been from my last shot, for from the course my game had run I could not have struck it in the left side with any of the previous ones.

It was a fair-sized buck, but in my excitement I could have carried it to the river bank without assistance. I suppose we should have dressed it on the spot, but our ideas of the operation were vague, and so we carried it as it was and tumbled it down on

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the sand bar beside our boat just as the Palace "hove in sight" around the bend above. We had killed our first deer, and felt reasonably proud of our achievement, though Bud persisted in speaking of "that little ol' deer you'uns happened ter hit," just as though the killing was an accident and the game itself so small as to be beneath the notice of a true sportsman.

It would be useless to relate all the incidents of the next few days. Before the week was out, Allan and I had each two deer to our credit. We might have made a better score, perhaps, but for one circumstance that weighed heavily against us. In driving his bargain with Bud, before my arrival, Allan had foolishly allowed our guide the privilege of setting and attending to a few traps as a means of increasing his earnings, and we more than suspected that, in selecting our stopping places, Bud was guided more by the amount of "coon sign" visible than by the probability of big game being found in the neighborhood. More than once I consulted Allan as to the practicability of making a new trade with the "rights and privileges" left out, but we both shrank from broaching the subject to the "party of the second part." Bud was a trapper, dyed in the wool, and if we had hinted at hanging up his traps for the season, he would certainly have thrown up his important position on board the Palace, and mapped out a campaign in which we would have had no part.

About three days was the limit of our stay in any one place, just time enough to get practically acquainted with the lay of the surrounding country. In one place—it was where the cut-off from Seven Mile lake entered the river—our halt was extended to a week, for game and fur both were abundant. At this point I killed four turkeys out of a flock of twenty or thirty, and Allan shot three deer, only one of which he secured.

We passed Des Arc and Devall's Bluff, two towns of considerable local importance. At the place last mentioned, we lay over a couple of days while awaiting provisions from Little Rock; but our time was not lost, for some of the planters in the neighborhood invited us out to their farms for quail shooting, giving Pat a chance to show the sort of work of which he was capable. We

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found the birds extremely plentiful, and so tame that they would hardly flush until fairly kicked out of the grass. The only drawback, that could be called such, was the extreme rankness of vegetation, which rendered it difficult at times to keep our dog in sight; but Pat worked tirelessly, winning the good opinion of all.

Our last week was spent at a point which possessed sufficient attraction to the over-particular Bud to make him concur in our desire to linger. There were more deer here than at any place previously visited, but we spent very little time in their pursuit. On the day of our arrival, Allan discovered a pool a mile or so from the river, where a bear family had been watering, and we thought our days would be best employed in watching for their return. Winter was rapidly approaching, and the beginning of the rainy season might be expected any hour. Therefore, if we wished to try our hand at what Bud called "water-hole shootin'" we must lose no time. Our opportunity might vanish at any minute.

As the food supply was very scarce in all parts of the cane region, it is possible that the bears were ranging a wider scope than is usually the case. Bud assured us that "b'ar allus drink out'n ther same hole," but if these did it must certainly have been "a long time between drinks" in their case. Every hour for three days and nights we kept that little pool under our watchful eyes, but nothing materialized. We had made us a snug blind behind an old log, occupied by both of us at night, while we watched by turns during the day, and if even a squirrel had ventured down to quench its thirst it could not have escaped our notice.

The morning of the fourth day we spent in our cots on board the Palace. After dinner we smoked our pipes and read some week-old Memphis dailies until the sun marked the hour for our afternoon's hunt; and then, for the first time during our trip down the river, all three of us started together, Allan with his Winchester, and Bud carrying his 32-caliber Marlin, while I brought up the rear, bearing the Greener with an ample load of buckshot in either barrel.

This world is full of coincidences, and the unexpected encounters us at every turn. About the time we stepped from the door of our

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floating camp, an old she bear and three half-grown cubs scrambled from their lair, and took a course that brought them to their old-time drinking pool, just as we reached it. Perhaps our surprise at the meeting was greater than their own. At all events, before we had had time to collect our thoughts, Mrs. Bruin was leading her interesting family in full retreat toward the nearest brake.

"Shoot," yelled Bud; and the spiteful report of his little rifle was followed by the fall of the nearest cub. Instantly I threw my gun forward, and both triggers were pressed almost simultaneously, but I had only a stern shot, and the No. 8 buck lacked penetration for this sort of work. By a rare piece of carelessness on his part, Allan's rifle was unloaded, and before he could throw a cartridge into the chamber, the old she bear had disappeared in the cane, dragging one hind-leg that had been broken by my shot. The cubs were slower, and another fell at the reports of the two rifles; but, only wounded, it struggled on, and two more shots were required to finish it.

Allan and I, if we had been alone, would have undoubtedly lost the wounded bear and the remaining cub, but Bud had been in many a bear hunt, and knew exactly how to proceed.

"Run around the p'int of ther ridge," said he, "they'll ha'ter cross ther slew, an' you kin head 'em off. Go ahead an' I'll foller 'em up."

He plunged into the cane, while we dashed away in compliance with his instructions. A run of two hundred yards brought us into the slough just as the remaining cub attempted to cross; but a shot and a yell turned him back, and we could see blood on the cane leaves where he had entered the brake.

Both of the bears were now wounded, and we had them between two fires. Of course it would be possible for them to attempt to escape along the narrow ridge, but a bear makes considerable noise in breaking its way through tangled cane, and by carefully listening we would be able to discover the direction they were going and cut them off.

Minutes passed, however, before any noise disturbed the oppressive silence, save the wheezing escape of a steamboat ascending

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the river, miles away, and the honk, honk, of a flock of geese hurrying southward. Suddenly we heard Bud's rifle again, and then his loud, deep-chested yell:

"Look out, fellers! I've done shot off tew more of her legs, but she's comin' on ther stumps."

Something was coming. We could hear it tearing through the cane like an incipient cyclone.

"Stand fast Craig-Royal and we'll weather it," quoted Allan under his breath; and then three shots were fired as fast as fingers could press the triggers; the cub fairly rolled out of the cane, his hide riddled with bullet and shot, while the old bear, open mouthed, dashed by so close that she struck the barrel of my gun, broken down for the reception of more cartridges.

How I wished for a repeater! It takes time to reload a shotgun, and instants seem like hours at such a time as this.

Bang!

A 45-caliber bullet struck Bruin in the shoulder, but a trifle too far forward to break the bone. The blow checked her for an instant and she turned half around facing us—and just in time to catch three ounces of buckshot in her breast. That was a "finisher." At such short range no rifle can equal in life-destroying power a heavily loaded shotgun.

Thus ended our bear hunt and our last day after big game of any description. That night the wind blew sharply from the northeast, a fall of snow and sleet followed.

With the storm came the ducks and geese, and, if we had liked, we could have loaded our boat with wild fowl. On the second day the cold moderated and the sleet changed to rain, but still the migration of ducks continued. Flying overhead and swimming with the current they passed us by thousands; unmolested, too, save by an occasional shot from one of the rifles, fired in a vain hope of equaling the feats credited to Leatherstockings and Dan Boones of fiction.

Three days before the date set for the end of our hunt, a steamboat passed, with Newport its objective point, and we decided to grasp that opportunity for our return. Fifteen minutes sufficed to pack our small belongings; a small army of ebony-hued roustabouts

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stood ready to hoist our trunks and boxes on board the larger craft; and then the engineer's bell rang, the big stern wheel revolved, and we began slowly forcing our way against the swollen current of White river, leaving the Palace to peacefully float at her moorings, once more, by our free gift, the property of that most inveterate of trappers, Bud.



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The Open Seasons for Game.

ARKANSAS.

QUAIL.—October 1 to March 1.

PINNATED GROUSE, PRAIRIE CHICKEN.—September 1 to February 1.

WILD TURKEY.—September 1 to May 1.

DEER.—August 1 to February 1.

License.—\$10.00 for each County.

LOUISIANA.

QUAIL.—September 1 to April 1.

WILD DUCK.—September 1 to April 1.

RUFFED GROUSE.—September 1 to April 1.

WILD TURKEY.—September 1 to April 1.

DEER.—September 1 to April 1.

MISSOURI.

QUAIL.—November 1 to January 1.

WOODCOCK.—August 1 to January 1.

WILD DUCK.—October 1 to April 1.

PINNATED GROUSE, PRAIRIE CHICKEN.—November 1 to January 1.

RUFFED GROUSE.—November 1 to January 1.

WILD TURKEY.—November 1 to January 1.

SNIPE.—August 1 to January 1.

DEER.—October 1 to January 1.

Non-residents not permitted.

TEXAS.

QUAIL.—October 1 to March 15.

PINNATED GROUSE, PRAIRIE CHICKEN.—August 1 to February 1.

RUFFED GROUSE.—October 1 to March 15.

WILD TURKEY.—September 1 to April 1.

DEER.—September 1 to January 1.

National Game Law.

The following enactment by Congress will be of vital interest to sportsmen, and should be carefully perused:

An Act to enlarge the powers of the Department of Agriculture, to prohibit the transportation by interstate commerce of game killed in violation of local laws, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the duties and powers of the Department of Agriculture are hereby enlarged so as to include the preservation, distribution, introduction, and restoration of game birds and other wild birds. The Secretary of Agriculture is hereby authorized to adopt such measures as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act and to purchase such game birds and other wild birds as may be required therefor, subject, however, to the laws of the various States and Territories. The object and purpose of this Act is to aid in the restoration of such birds in those parts of the United States adapted thereto where the same have become scarce or extinct, and also to regulate the introduction of American or foreign birds or animals in localities where they have not heretofore existed.

The Secretary of Agriculture shall from time to time collect and publish useful information as to the propagation, uses, and preservation of such birds.

And the Secretary of Agriculture shall make and publish all needful rules and regulations for carrying out the purposes of this Act, and shall expend for said purposes such sums as Congress may appropriate therefor.

SEC. 2. That it shall be unlawful for any person or persons to import into the United States any foreign wild animal or bird except under special permit from the United States Department of Agri-

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culture: *Provided*, That nothing in this section shall restrict the importation of natural history specimens for museums or scientific collections, or the importation of certain cage birds, such as domesticated canaries, parrots, or such other species as the Secretary of Agriculture may designate.

The importation of the mongoose, the so-called "flying-foxes" or fruit bats, the English sparrow, the starling, or such other birds or animals as the Secretary of Agriculture may from time to time declare injurious to the interests of agriculture or horticulture is hereby prohibited, and such species upon arrival at any of the ports of the United States shall be destroyed, or returned at the expense of the owner. The Secretary of the Treasury is hereby authorized to make regulations for carrying into effect the provisions of this section.

SEC. 3. That it shall be unlawful for any person or persons to deliver to any common carrier, or for any common carrier to transport from one State or Territory to another State or Territory, or from the District of Columbia or Alaska to any State or Territory, or from any State or Territory to the District of Columbia or Alaska, any foreign animals or birds, the importation of which is prohibited, or the dead bodies or parts thereof of any wild animals or birds, where such animals or birds have been killed in violation of the laws of the State, Territory, or District in which the same were killed: *Provided*, That nothing herein shall prevent the transportation of any dead birds or animals killed during the season when the same may be lawfully captured, and the export of which is not prohibited by law in the State, Territory, or District in which the same are killed.

SEC. 4. That all packages containing such dead animals, birds, or parts thereof, when shipped by interstate commerce, as provided in section one of this Act, shall be plainly and clearly marked, so that the name and address of the shipper and the nature of the contents may be readily ascertained on inspection of the outside of such packages. For each evasion or violation of this Act the shipper shall, upon conviction, pay a fine of not exceeding two hundred dollars; and the consignee knowingly receiving such articles so shipped and transported in violation of this Act shall, upon con-

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viction, pay a fine of not exceeding two hundred dollars; and the carrier knowingly carrying or transporting the same shall, upon conviction, pay a fine of not exceeding two hundred dollars.

SEC. 5. That all dead bodies, or parts thereof, of any foriegn game animals, or game or song birds, the importation of which is prohibited, or the dead bodies, or parts thereof, of any wild game animals, or game or song birds transported into any State or Territory, or remaining therein for use, consumption, sale or storage therein, shall upon arrival in such State or Territory be subject to the operation and effect of the laws of such State or Territory enacted in the exercise of its police powers, to the same extent and in the same manner as though such animals or birds had been produced in such State or Territory, and shall not be exempt therefrom by reason of being introduced therein in original packages or otherwise. This Act shall not prevent the importation, transportation, or sale of birds or bird plumage manufactured from the feathers of barnyard fowl.

Approved, May 25, 1900.



The Wonderful Chicot Lake Country.

From the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

DOWN in Southeastern Arkansas the lovers of good shooting and fishing, wild and weird scenery, such as can be found in no other part of the State—or the country, for that matter—are directed to Chicot, Lincoln and Desha Counties. The Arkansas branch of the Iron Mountain Railroad penetrates this wild territory, with its fine lakes, bayous, creeks and rivers, wonderful pine forests, cane thickets and dark cypress swamps. The deer, bear, wild turkey, wolf, panther, squirrel and myriads of wild fowl find places that are suited to their ideas of free life, where everybody that has a gun will not venture as deep as their haunts into the trackless forests and great water spreads.

The fishing is surely the finest of its kind in the whole country. Both large and small mouth black bass are found in the waters of the southeastern wilderness. Lake Chicot is perhaps the greatest body of water to be found in the South for grand fishing and duck shooting. The waters are as clear as crystal and of great depths. The crappie of Lake Chicot are the finest in the world. George R. Mann, the well-known architect, was fishing down there last November, after the fly-casting season was over. Where a giant pine had tumbled into the water and sunk to the depths of 50 feet, Mr. Mann let down his line, baited with little sunfish, and to his astonishment began pulling out crappie that averaged nearly three pounds each. In one hour's fishing he had more fish than he could carry, and pulled off toward the club house, letting out his long trolling line. In one mile's rowing he took nine bass, running from four to nine pounds. That ended his fishing for that trip. The ducks came along toward night, and then his soul was full of glory. He is a duck shooter who knows how to drop the broadbills all the way up to 75 and 80 yards. He killed fifty ducks in the evening's shoot,

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in Chicot and other waters. There are many points in the lake where the water is 150 feet deep.

and concluded that the rest of his time he would put in exploring the surroundings. He ran into deer and all other game in such numbers that he came to the conclusion that there must be a game convention in session in the glorious old pine forest.

The following letter from J. M. Parker to Mr. H. C. Townsend, general passenger agent of the Missouri Pacific Railroad Company, will give the reader briefly the conditions that prevail at Arkansas' grandest fishing lake. Although Mr. Parker omits to mention the shooting in the neighborhood, he tells the sportsmen who may desire to get out in the great fishing and game country some interesting facts. The name of the club at Lake Chicot is the Idlewild Hunting and Fishing Club. The members are mostly from the South, but they do not exclude good sportsmen, who come well recommended, from the privilege of their cozy and complete club house. It is presumed from the tone of Mr. Parker's letter that letters of inquiry should be addressed to him at Hamburg, Ashley County, Ark. Here is the letter:

"Dear Sir--We have a very nice club house over on Lake Chicot, and Mr. Wheless spoke to me about the message which you sent him in regard to fishing on the lake. I should be more than pleased to have you, or any of your friends whom you would like to send down, come to our club. I should take pleasure in showing you everything we have, and can assure you that the fishing is as fine as there is in the country, striped bass, black bass and trout. They are all striking at flies and trolls, and some phenomenal catches have been made. The lake is about twenty-five miles long, and a mile wide. We have a very nice club house, capable of taking care of about thirty people, and have as good a kitchen and dining room service as they have in any of the hotels in the South, and good accommodations for rooms, and plenty of boats, and can take care of any party that comes down, giving them all the comforts of a club, together with as fine fishing as there is in the country. Gov. Jones and party spent a week with us and were very highly pleased.

J. M. PARKER, President."

Where Mr. Parker speaks of "trout," he refers to the small-mouth black bass, as it is called trout in the South. There are also pickerel

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There are some monster catfish down in the depths that afford great sport for hand or trot line fishermen. A party of them from Arkansas City took a wagon load of channel and gudgeon cats in one night. They would rather have that kind of fish than black bass or giant crappie any time. They had a great night's sport on Chicot, winding up with a coon hunt that netted twenty-seven pelts. There are also beavers and otters in Chicot and adjoining county.

Old "Pap" Martin was out with a party of gentlemen for a day in the early season, and they gathered 260 pounds of bass and crappie. "Pap" Martin is a great old sportsman, who can catch more bass with buck tail bobs than any man in Arkansas. He is a famous old hunter also, having to his credit over 1,000 deer and 200 bears. He hunts around Chicot, Lincoln, Desha and Ashley counties, and does most of his fishing in Chicot Lake.

The whole country for miles up and down the Mississippi, through the southeastern tier of counties, you will find as pleasant places to visit as you ever wished for. Combination of good fishing, wild scenery and here and there a hunter's cabin to cheer you up, and game such as you hunters are not used to, can always be found in such quantities as good sportsmen enjoy seeing, even if they don't want to kill it. In the forests may be found deer, quail, wild turkeys and squirrels, in abundance.

At Idlewild Station a large and commodious club house has been erected, known as the "Idlewild Club." This beautiful structure is located on a high bank, overlooking the clear and placid Lake Chicot, after which this route has been named. This lake is a mile wide, twenty-five miles long and from five to fifty feet deep. In it are found black and striped bass, and all the game fish to be found in any waters of its kind in the United States. It is equal, for sport, to any of the lakes found in the far North. Here is the finest fly and troll fishing in the South. Three parties, in boats, in one afternoon, caught eight hundred black and striped bass with hook and line.

Thus writes J. M. Parker, general manager of the Mississippi River, Hamburg & Western Railway, which connects with the Iron Mountain and Southern at Montrose on the Arkansas City Branch from Little Rock.

Sport in Desha County.

THE following experience of two sportsmen down in Desha County, as related in the *Globe-Democrat* of St. Louis, will be interesting reading to all who love to hunt and fish:

"Talk about a stag party," says a hunter, who has just got back from Desha County, Ark., having spent two weeks in that wild and woolly country around Dead Lakes; "well, I ran right into one the second day I was down in Desha County. It was early in the morning that I was trailing down a bayou through a moderate growth of cane. I heard a noise back in an opening, where only switch cane grew. Then I heard a buck bleat angrily, then a thrashing about in the cane. Cautiously I crept through the thicket and peered out into the opening. The sight that dawned upon me was really startling in its realism. Standing at the edge of a thicket were two lordly bucks with heads erect, intently watching a morning duel between two other equally fine specimens of the male deer. Their horns were locked, and both the bucks were on their knees. With gun in readiness for a quick shot I watched the battle royal almost breathlessly for a few moments. The struggle was the most fierce I ever witnessed of any kind. It was at times thrilling and majestic to behold. It seemed as if the brutes were inseparably locked in the death struggle, so I leveled my old 10-bore, shelled with 4 drams of nitro-powder and 12 buckshot, at the heads of the fighting monarchs of Dead Lake. When the old piece bellowed and belched its deadly charge the seconds of the duelists leaped into the air and were lost in the tall cane like a flash. But those old fighters never broke apart, but fell prone upon the carpet of switch cane, with protuding tongues, both of them being shot through the heads and necks and very soon were ready for the knife. When I was cutting the deers' throats I heard two gunshots in rapid succession in the direction the two bucks had vanished. My partner, John Hornsly, of Little Rock, was down the bayou in line with the flying bucks. We were to meet about opposite the place I killed my two bucks.

I could do nothing until we joined hands, so I sauntered down in the direction from which the reports of the gun came. Hornsly saw me coming and yelled like an Indian to me to hurry to his aid, saying he had two bucks downed. I helped him hang the game up, but never said a word about my double-header shot until I walked him up to their dead bodies. We were both so surprised by the results of the morning we could hardly express ourselves. Hornsly looked as if he would faint when he saw my old bucks stretched out; but the spasm did not last long. He broke out into Indian whoops that echoed through the dark old forest and rolled far over Dead Lakes, and died away along the Father of Waters. Hornsly stood guard over my fallen foemen until I could go back to camp, where our guide was to arrive that morning with his team. He was the most surprised man that ever crossed White River when he learned we had killed a whole flock of deer.

"We concluded that deer were too easy for us; besides, we had more than our allowance of venison. After starting the guide into Winchester with three of the bucks to be shipped to friends of Hornsly in Little Rock, who were to have them dressed and divided, sending one saddle, carefully marked, to Chief of Police Campbell, of St. Louis, we turned our attention to ducks and the securing of live bait for fishing in Noble and Swan Lakes. One of the deer we retained for meat at camp. I ate so much venison I can feel horns sprouting. The two bucks with the locked horns were not separated, but shipped as they fell.

"Fishing in Swan Lake was excellent. We had to use little sun-fish for bait, but the bass and pickerel took to that kind of bait as well as any we cared to offer. Hornsly caught some of the greatest crappie I ever saw, and what do you think he caught them with? Nothing but the eyes of big skip-jacks that we caught in seining for bait. I caught a 12-pound pickerel on a 6-inch skip. We caught lots of fine pickerel, which our guide salted and packed for home use. His style of pickling was new to me, but I must say the fish tasted all right after two weeks in the brine. There were plenty of ducks, squirrels and all kinds of game in Desha, and now it is getting to be just the time to fish and hunt down in the wilds of Dead Lake country. I don't expect anybody will run into a stag party like we did, but they will get some fine sport."

On Little River's Spreads.

TWO sportsmen relate their experience after ducks in the Little River country: "We heard some wild stories about the bad men that hunted the mallards for a livelihood in the Little River everglades, but we threw ourselves upon their hospitality and were treated with every courtesy possible by those hardy denizens of the Southeast wilderness.

"We landed at Buffington, on Iron Mountain, and had a cabin-boat built, and just cut loose and floated down to Dad's. That's all I knew about the old trapper except that he is a good and faithful old guide. His cabin in the woods is a picture typical of his calling. The hut of the 'Arkansas Traveler' could not be more picturesque. Dad's cabin was decorated with skins of all the fur animals that are found in the Little River country. I lost out on pictures that I had hoped to make. I discovered there was but two exposures left in my camera when I got down to work. It is a great disappointment, for there was so much of character and scenery that was worth a place in the collection of hunting and fishing pictures.

"The way the natives hunt ducks is very interesting to one who gets his first introduction to their methods. They have live decoys, that are trained as well as Sport's Gath. Dad was pulling down the channel one day, when four mallards came skimming the surface of the stream, and I threw up my gun to take a crack at them.

"'Hold on, Mister, don't shoot them birds,' said Dad. 'They be John Short's decoys. He do have sum uv the best in the woods.'

"I could hardly believe it possible until the four drakes settled down among the ducks that Short had anchored only 30 feet from us. The females had a ring around their necks, to which was attached a string and a weight, that was anchored on the bottom. The drakes were left to fly at will, and many a big flock of mallards were lured in by these birds.

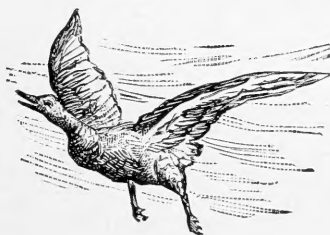
"I was wondering how the hunter could get the drakes when he quit for the night, but he demonstrated very quickly. The ducks

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were lifted into the boat, and then the paddle was raised in a threatening manner, and the old male birds climbed over the gunwale of the duck boat and squatted down, heads to the bow, where they remained until Short reached camp. Where these market hunters get the live decoys I did not learn, but nearly all of them have the sure enough live mallards.

"How these men can stand the hardships and privations of continuous existence down in the wilds of Little River country is a mystery to me. They seemed to be as hardy as a stall-fed athlete of the town. There is no great remuneration in killing ducks for the market, on account of losses in shipping the game. But one of the hunters told me there is a fascination about hunting and trapping that holds a man who once gets into the business against all inducements to better his condition.

"I want to say that there is no place in this country where the duck hunter can get right into the haunts of the wild fowl comparable to the spreads of Little River, and where Mr. McKinley and myself spent three of the most enjoyable weeks that could be asked for by a sportsman. There are deer, wild turkeys, squirrels, ducks of all kinds, and a world of furred animals down yon'. I am told the ducks stay all winter unless the weather happens to be exceedingly severe."



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